

Film Festivals and Social Movements Intertwined: The Spatial Activism of the Istanbul Film Festival Audience during the Gezi Protests

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Abstract

This thesis focuses on the relationship between film festivals and political activism by taking the International Istanbul Film Festival (IIFF) audience as a case study during the Gezi uprising. It is a study of a community's political action hand in hand with their cosmopolitan imagination and nostalgic feelings in their engagement with the IIFF, when Turkey increasingly lurched towards authoritarianism in the 2010s. Through the increasing number of festival films and events that went against the dominant ideology in Turkey, this audience community embraced an activist cosmopolitanism which set the ground for political action. It scrutinises their formation of nostalgic feelings for the historical spaces in Beyoğlu, developed jointly by their anti-neoliberal discourses while also displaying their political action against the top-down urban regeneration programmes. In order to account for their political activism, revolving initially around festival spaces and then occupied parks, I conducted an ethnographic research at the festival and the Gezi uprising from 2013 to 2014. Employing participant observation, life histories and in-depth interviews, this research examines the intricacies of human relations with spaces, social movements and cultural events at an increasingly authoritarian regime. The rise of authoritarianism also implied a transformation in my methodology.

This thesis offers a timely contribution to the relationship between neo-liberalism and Islamic fundamentalism while pointing to people's political use of cultural spaces. It also offers new insights on the phenomenon of film festivals by relating them to urban cultures and social movements in their hosting cities. It expands our knowledge on non-Western audiences' engagement with a film festival, whilst providing an interpretation of social movement development attached to cultural spaces such as film festivals. More broadly, it gives new insights on the film and protest culture of a secular group within a predominantly Muslim culture in showing the ways in which they oppose Islamic fundamentalism and neoliberalism. It situates the Emek movement and the Gezi uprising, not only in their close affinity with Istanbul's cityscape and Turkey's political situation but also in their organic relationship with global social movements particularly the Occupy movements and the Arab Spring. Thus, this thesis makes a unique interdisciplinary contribution to

the existing literature on film festivals as well as urban research and social movements.

Key words: Film festivals, social movements, audience research, the Gezi Park, urban studies, neoliberalism, cosmopolitanism, nostalgia

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The List of Abbreviations

AKM	The Atatürk Cultural Centre in Beyoğlu
AKP	The Justice and Development Party in Turkey
EMT	The Emek Movie Theatre
FIAPF	The International Federation of Film Producers Association
FIPRESCI	The International Federation of Film Critics
GFF	The Glasgow Film Festival
HDP	The People's Democratic Party in Turkey
IIFF	The International Istanbul Film Festival
IKSV	The Istanbul Foundation for Culture and Art
ISIS	The Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant
NATO	The North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
PKK	The Kurdistan Workers' Party
RTÜK	The Radio and Television Supreme Council in Turkey
SARFT	The State Administration of Press, Publication, Radio, Film and Television in China
TMMOB	The Union of Chambers of Turkish Engineers and Architects
TOMA	The Intervention Vehicle to Social Events

Chapter 1

Introduction: Overview and Purpose

1.1.Introduction

Film festivals are significant networks of exhibition and distribution as well as sites of socialisation and politicisation for their audiences. Until recently, they have been underrated as a field of research within film, media and cultural studies. Film festivals need to be engaged more in scholarly literature, not only because a film festival opens every thirty-six hours (Archibald & Miller, 2011a: 249) and they are a means for the distribution and exhibition of festival films, but also because audiences can embrace cosmopolitan identities in their engagement with film festivals and use them as political spaces. In the case of the International Istanbul Film Festival (IIFF), its audiences used it as a cultural counter-public sphere at a radically changing time period right before, during and after the Gezi uprising, which led to their formation of cosmopolitan identities, nostalgic feelings, and political action as well. In addition to being a cinematic activity, this thesis describes film festival attendance as a potentially social and political activity, because contemporary film festival audiences can easily reach the festival films via the Internet. Apart from watching films, audience communities socialize and politicize at film festivals and feel a sense of belonging to their festival spaces and communities, which stems from the fact that these events are social and political events and embedded in the spatial, political and cultural context of their hosting cities.

In this thesis, the main discussion revolves around the ways in which the cinematic activity of a film festival audience transformed into political activity during the Gezi protests against the Islamist neo-liberal authorities in Turkey. The research questions for the thesis include, but are not limited to the following: What is the relationship between film festivals and political activism? In what ways do audiences use film festivals as political spaces? In what ways do film festivals have the potential to create cosmopolitan identities in their attendees? How do audiences' engagement with film festival spaces and festival films transform their identities? What is the impact of urban social movements on film festival attendance? What is the impact of authoritarian periods on people's film festival attendance? How have radical urban

regeneration programmes in Istanbul changed film festival attendance and audiences' feelings? How did park and occupation culture impact movie-going around the Gezi uprising? How do audiences feel about the loss of the movie theatres and other spaces that they previously felt belonging to?

In order to interrogate these research questions, the thesis combines the approaches to the public sphere (Habermas: 1974, 1991, 2006; Calhoun: 1992, 2002, 2003), the 'right to the city' (Lefebvre: 1996, 2003; Harvey: 2005, 2007, 2008, 2012), cosmopolitanism (Werbner: 1999, 2006a, 2006b, 2012, 2015; Chouliaraki, 2013; Yılmaz & Trandafoiu, 2015), globalisation (Sassen, 2000; Harvey, 2007; Gökarıksel & Secor, 2009, 2010) and nostalgia (Sayre & Löwy, 1984; Boym: 2001). I employ the concept of public sphere because the IIFF functioned as an alternative public sphere for its audiences, especially in people's loss of faith in the traditional public spheres. I use cosmopolitanism and globalisation as central approaches, because audiences became more open to different cultures and global resistances via the films they watched at the IIFF, while Istanbul's transformation into a global city had radical impacts on their use of the film festival and the city. Additionally, the concept of 'the right to the city' provides an important discussion to the thesis as this audience community attempted to claim their rights to the movie theatres and parks in Istanbul. This audience community also embraced a nostalgic perspective of the past, which partly stemmed from their attachment to the previous republican regime. In this regard the concepts of restorative and reflective nostalgias¹ were useful in order to examine their nostalgic attachment to the past spaces in Istanbul. These diverse approaches are applied to the study of film festivals, using an ethnographic method, in order to provide a deeper insight into the political activism of the Istanbul-based film festival audience at the IIFF in the 2010s.

Thus this thesis makes a unique interdisciplinary contribution to the existing literature on film festivals as well as urban research and audience

¹ For a detailed analysis of Boym's (2001) concepts of restorative and reflective nostalgias and my use of these terms, see section 2 in chapter 6.

studies, in dwelling on concepts from social movement studies, sociology and geography. Its interdisciplinary contribution stems from an examination of the film festivals' spatial nature and their relationship to political activism and therefore an interrogation of their close affinity with urban social movements. In addition, as the basis of this research relies on not only an analysis of audiences' activities as members of a film festival community but also an ethnographic approach to their political actions outside the time of the IIFF, it expands the boundaries of audience research. This thesis also advances discussion on film festivals' characteristics as transnational social spaces. Film festivals around the world, especially the ones taking place in global cities provide ground for transnational human interaction and create cosmopolitan identities. The resulting reality is *transnational social spaces* (Beck, 2000; Pries, 2001). It situates the IIFF in the context of the proliferation of transnational public spheres within global cities, such as civil societies, community centres, social movements, art venues and festivals, which particularly transformed Istanbul's urban culture into a cosmopolitan urban culture. Film festival audiences use the transnational spaces of film festivals not only to watch films but also in order to participate in democracy and decision-making processes as citizens.

This thesis takes the challenge to expand the limits of audience and film festival research by relating film festivals to social justice, democracy, and human rights, which primarily stem from their audiences' use of and engagement with them as political spaces and public spheres, in this specific case as a counter-public sphere. Although film festivals have always been political entities, their political roots and impact have not been widely dealt with in the existing literature. R ling and Pedersen (2010: 320) articulate the role of Venice Film festival as a platform for fascist aesthetic and ideology while they also show that Berlin film festival served as a political statement in the context of cold war in the then divided city of Berlin. However, not much empirical research focused on these festivals' deeper relationship with politics and ideologies. Other than the main film festivals in the West, for instance the

Carthage Film Festival² (1966) in Tunisia or The International Antalya Film Festival³ in Turkey have been closely tied to the changing political agendas in their hosting countries. Similar to the principal film festivals, no academic research dealt with these film festivals' affinity to wider politics. In the existing scholarly literature on film festivals' political implications, the general tendency is to focus on the programming and discursive analysis of directly activist ones like human rights film festivals and theme-based ones like queer film festivals, mainly in the West, which has been the primary line of discussion in the existing scholarly literature (Kim, 2005; Cordova, 2012; Torchin, 2012; Loist & Zielinski, 2012; Iordanova, 2012; Dönmez-Colin, 2014; Martinez, Frances, Agirre & Manias-Muñoz, 2015; Tascón, 2015).

In the existing scholarly literature, film festivals are dealt with in their relation to national cinemas (Chan, 2011), their position within institutions such as regional film production companies (Sun, 2014), the evaluation standards of their prizes and their prestige (Dodds & Holbrook, 1998; De Valck & Soeteman, 2010), the programming of the festivals (Sklar, 1996; Czach, 2004), their affinity with tourism and branding of the cities (Ooi & Pedersen, 2009; 2010) and their own star system (Czach, 2010; Castro, 2014). There is not much ethnographic research, however, on the general film festival audiences and on their reception of and engagement with film festivals. To date, general audiences' engagement with film festivals have not been the center of attention in scholarly research, except for the research of Frohlick (2005), Khorana (2012) and Dickson (2015). In addition, festivals' relation to political activism has not been dealt with through the lens of the general audiences, although previous research engaged with activism during film festivals, for instance through an analysis of the

² Banks considers the Carthage Film Festival as a proof that radical liberalism is alive in North Africa and that Tunisian people use it to combat terrorism. For a more comprehensive analysis, see: <http://lwlies.com/festivals/carthage-film-festival-tunisia-terrorism/> [Accessed 15 September 2016].

³ Genç (2014) analysed the protests of the filmmakers and preliminary jury in the wake of the censorship of *Love Will Change the Earth* (Reyan Tuvi, 2014) at the International Antalya Film Festival in 2014. For a more detailed picture, see: <http://www.bfi.org.uk/news-opinion/sight-sound-magazine/comment/festivals/forbidden-fruit-censorship-antalya-golden-orange> [Accessed 15 September 2016].

activities of filmmakers and artists against Israeli funding in the Toronto International Film Festival (Archibald & Miller, 2011b) or via a comparative perspective of human rights film festivals around the globe by focusing on their programming (Tascón, 2015). Therefore, my research advances current discourse on film festival research and its relation to political activism in its portrayal of the experiences and practices of the general audiences at a film festival as well as expanding beyond the time and scope of the film festival in question on the use of ethnographies in film festival research.

I point to film festivals' ability to promote visibility for underprivileged and/or non-gentrified communities and their function as potential sites against the current rise of neo-liberalism for their audiences, especially around the periods of uprisings or waves of protests in their hosting cities, such as Istanbul during the Gezi uprising. The particular audience community at the IIFF fought to prevent the demolition of the historical Emek movie theatre (EMT), which was not only the symbolic venue of the IIFF and the previous film industry Yeşilçam, for years, but also became one of the symbols of the increasing repression in Istanbul and Turkey. In order to prevent the demolition of the EMT, the inception of the Emek movement began during the IIFF in April, 2010 and lasted until January 2015, which marked the culture of the IIFF during these years. The Emek movement comprised of traditional demonstrations, film screenings and street bands' performances, occupation of the EMT and the shopping mall next to it and a diversity of other protests. This audience community's experiences at the IIFF, especially in the course of their festival activism, created a cosmopolitan and nostalgic film festival culture, which provided the background of their anti-Islamist and anti-neo-liberal political mobilisation. My fieldwork is situated during a specific period in Turkey, right before, during and after the Gezi uprising, which began on the 28th of May and lasted until the 30th of August, 2013. I aim to provide a glimpse of the experiences of a particular audience community and their engagement with a specific cultural space –the IIFF- in this time period, although I was already immersed in the IIFF scene from 2002 onwards.

The activism, both in the Emek movement and the Gezi uprising, revolved mainly around the protection and occupation of the previous public

spaces. In order to create their free community in a symbolic place, this activist community occupied the EMT and the Gezi Park. During the course of the Emek movement, on the 7th of April, 2013, for half an hour the activists occupied the EMT, while the activists occupied the Gezi Park from the 1st of June until the 15th of June, 2013, during the Gezi uprising. In this respect, this thesis appropriates Lefebvre's (1996) popular concept of 'right to the city'. This community claimed their right to the festival spaces as well as the Gezi Park. According to Castells (2012), occupied spaces have played a major role in the history of social change, as well as in contemporary practice, because they create communities based on togetherness. Castells (2012: 10-11) also shows that 'occupied spaces are charged with the symbolic power of invading sites of state power or financial institutions. Often buildings are occupied either for their symbolism or to affirm the right of public use of property. By constructing a free community in a symbolic place, social movements create a public space for deliberation, which ultimately becomes a political space, a space for sovereign assemblies to meet and to recover their rights of representation.' The use of occupation as a method transformed the spaces of the state or private properties into people's autonomous and free units where they not only engaged in rational discussions (Habermas, 1974) but they also freely expressed their feelings. The occupation also consolidated this community's feeling of togetherness and understanding of the power of their own agencies as well as creating bonds between different groups which did not have much connection before. Previously underrepresented and currently repressed groups actively participated in and spoke up in this public sphere and went beyond the generally state-centred public sphere in Turkey, which turned it into a counter-public sphere. This community's participation in and understanding of citizenship expanded through their activism in order to reclaim ownership of the public spaces in the context of the film festival and the uprising.

In order to account for the transformation from a cinematic activity into an increasingly political activism and active citizenship at the International Istanbul Film Festival (IIFF) and social movements around it, I conducted an audience

and social movements ethnography at the IIFF and the Gezi uprising from 2013 to 2014. This included 62 in-depth interviews, 'go-alongs'⁴ (Kusenbach, 2003) and participant observation with the IIFF audience, including two of its organisers, a jury member and a temporary worker. My initial research approach was an audience ethnography based on the implications of the changes in the film industry⁵ and the urban structure of Istanbul on audiences' festival activism. Due to the rise of authoritarianism in Turkey, my methodology transformed into a combination of audience and social movements' ethnographies on the audiences' political activism within and beyond the film festival. The central methodological approach revolves around an observation of and participation in the audiences' involvement in the movie theatres at the film festival, their engagement with the films and events and their involvement with demonstrations and occupations with the aim of obtaining a detailed knowledge and understanding of the audiences' own festival narratives and audience doings (Gillespie, 1995; Srinivas, 1998). In this way, the main undertaking was to document the 'ordinariness' of the audience behaviour and experience during the film festival, in addition to the audience's own accounts of their experiences (Sabry, 2005), which was only possible by conducting an audience ethnography.

My audience ethnography at the IIFF also extended to the Gezi uprising, which also changed the ways in which this community engaged with the spaces. In order to examine the politicisation of an audience community, I also

⁴ Go-alongs can be described as an informal form of ethnography, which means 'hanging out' with informants while they engage in natural activities (Kusenbach, 2003: 477-478).

⁵ Before the Gezi uprising, I had collected data based on the impact of the radical urban regeneration programmes and the fall of the Yeşilçam industry on the politicisation of the IIFF audiences. After the collapse of the Yeşilçam industry in the late 1980s, the popularity of large format movie theatres decreased in Istanbul. Nevertheless, in the increasing number and intensity of urban social movements in 2013, I changed my focus in order to delve deeper into the impact of social movements and uprisings on the IIFF audience's spatial engagement with the festival. For a more detailed analysis on the film industries in Turkey, see section 2 in chapter 4.

benefitted from an activist ethnographic perspective (Graeber, 2002, 2009; Hale, 2006; Juris, 2007, 2008, 2012; Petray, 2012). Commonly used in the research on social movements, an activist research strategy implied that I as the researcher shared in the political values and emotions with this audience community in their social movements around the festival. The aim in this thesis, however, is not to give a detailed chronology of the Emek movement or the Gezi uprising but theoretically tease out the involvement of an audience community in social movements and to account for their shifting identities and their understanding of festival attendance at a radically shifting time period.

With the use of an ethnographic method, I not only aim to show the collective identities and experiences of a community but also to account for the differences in their uses of the festival, spaces and the protests. The underlying intention in this thesis is to discuss that we can only understand the collective identity of a community if we can understand the individual identities of the attendees (Whittier, 2012: 145). There is much research discussing the relationship between collective and individual identity in social movements (Melucci 1985; Taylor & Whittier et al., 1992). Against those who point out that identity politics is a retreat from politics, I reiterate that activists develop and refine identity strategies in order to demand recognition and respect for themselves as different, not for inclusion within the fold of 'universal humankind' (Kruks, 2001: 85). Feminism also had an indispensable impact in this area as in the commonly known slogan of the feminist movement, 'the personal is political'. 'When the woman's movement declared 'the personal is political' in the 1960s and 1970s, women were invited to reinterpret private experiences of exploitation and violence in a shared, social and political context' (Cahill, 2007: 268). While I point to this community's shared values and practices, I also aim to represent their private experiences with films, people and spaces. As an example of this, although the general tendency of this audience community was a negative reaction to the use of multiplexes during the IIFF, the private experience of some of my informants also proved that it was more complex than a single and homogeneous reaction.

The reason why I chose the IIFF as my case study is not only because it has been a staple of film culture in Turkey (Arslan, 2014) but it also represents

the impact of the social and political transformations in Turkey on the cultural and creative industries from its foundation onwards. In addition, my personal reason was I had specific knowledge of the Turkish language and the festival culture in Istanbul. As an institution, the Istanbul Foundation for Culture and Arts (IKSV), which was founded on the 50th anniversary of the Turkish Republic in 1973, adapted the republican values and continued its 'modernising' mission throughout its history (Yardımcı, 2005). The IKSV founded the IIFF in 1983, which not only marks the aftermath of the most severe military regime in Turkey that lasted from the 12th of September 1980 to 1983, but its early years also date back to the early beginnings of the globalisation of Istanbul's cityscape (Icduygu, 2004; Baer, 2007). The IIFF is still located at the crossroads of the social, cultural and political transformations in Turkey, apart from being the most international film festival there, fostering not only national cinema but also contributing to a global film culture.

On a wider perspective, the reason I examined Istanbul as my case study not only stems from the fact that Istanbul has been the most important centre of Turkey's film scene with a rich history, but also its global situation within Islam, neo-liberalism and globalisation. Although Ankara has been the capital of Turkey from the foundation of the Turkish republic onwards, Istanbul has been the real centre of Anatolia and Turkey for centuries and it is currently home to various cultural, social, economic and political transformations, outcomes of which cannot easily be traced. Istanbul has long been discussed with its geopolitical importance in its symbolic crossroads position between East and West, Islam and European Christendom (Robins & Aksoy, 1996; Aksoy, 2008; Keyman, 2010). Increasing financial, trade and tourism relations with the Middle Eastern countries after the oil boom in the 1970s, and Istanbul's role as a conduit zone between Europe and the war raging between Iran and Iraq, offered Istanbul a regional role (Keyder, 1999: 14). I argue that this feature of Istanbul as a conduit zone still persists today in different forms, such as its central position as a city of refugees, hosting more Syrian refugees than in all the rest of Europe.

To provide a brief background, although Turkey has a republican history with a secular characteristic, the foundation of which dates back to 1923,

religion and nationalism have always remained omnipresent in Turkish society as dominant ideologies. To illustrate, 'the last Ottoman parliament, which arrived at the consensus that the term Turk included all the different Muslim elements on 17 February 1920; some deputies even included Ottoman Jews within the term Turk' (Ahmad, 2003: 80-81). The Turkish republic also followed this path in its efforts to construct a national consciousness. 'It developed a repressive policy towards Kurdish identity: the public use of Kurdish and the teaching of Kurdish were prohibited' (Zurcher, 1993: 170-171). Although the Turkish Republic was not democratic, it was no longer a neo-patriarchal sultanate in the 1920s. If we examine the Kemalist⁶ record after 1923, we find that the regime moved away from traditionalism towards modernity. 'The Kemalists introduced laicism (laiklik), that is to say, a state-controlled Islam and not secularism, i.e. separating religion from politics' (Ahmad, 2003: 84). Both Western European and Soviet models of modernity inspired Turkish officials to secularise the country by placing religion under the strict supervision and control of the state, wherein they discarded the symbols and institutions of Muslim rule, such as the office of the caliph, religious orders, lodges, tombs and schools (Özyürek, 2006: 13). Turkish modernity implied Turkification and laicism, which were important characteristics of culture, impacting on the history of cinema, cultural and creative industries in Turkey. However, religion has always been the main point of reference by which almost all political parties relate themselves to Turkish voters since the transition to multi-party-based parliamentary democracy in 1945 (Keyman, 2007: 223).

This thesis interrogates the political activism of a film festival community against the Islamist neo-liberalism during the AKP (Justice and Development Party) period, but as it could be traced from the historical background, Islamist neo-liberalism did not develop out of nothing. Keyman and Koyuncu (2005)

⁶ Kemalism refers to the ideas and principles of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, who is the founder and first president of the Turkish Republic. Kemalism constitutes the official ideology of the state, and endured publicly unchallenged until the 1980s. Kemalism proper is symbolized in the six principles, which are republicanism, statism (in economic policy), populism, laicism, nationalism, and reformism (Tunçay).

describe the genealogy of 'strong-state tradition' in relation to Turkish modernity since the beginning of the republic. The strong state tradition implies that the state has assumed the capacity of acting almost completely independently from civil society and second, that the state, rather than the government, has constituted the primary context of politics. The strong state's intentions to homogenise the 'national' culture has culminated in the AKP's period (2002-...), which aimed to turn it into a culture of Sunni-Turk synthesis within a neo-liberal economic context.

In this framework, this thesis also points to the marriage of Islamism and neo-liberalism (Rudnyckyj, 2009; Gökarıksel, 2012; Karaman, 2013), which also determines the macro transformations from above as well as the transformation of cultural spaces and social movements from below in Turkey. The AKP comes closer to the Turkish-Islamic synthesis, which has been one of the main characteristics of many right wing parties in Turkey since the 1980s and also supported by the generals of the 1980 coup for the so-called 'socio-economic stability'. Although the AKP also claimed that it was a centre-right party, their policies, especially policies on education and reform debates, proved to the contrary (Boyras & Turan, 2013). The AKP's pragmatic and populist use of motives from within Turkish nationalism and Islamic culture at the same time as its foreign policy and economic policies, such as its pro-EU foreign policy and neo-liberal economic agenda (anti-protectionist and globalist), account for its neo-liberal agenda (Coşar, 2012: 89).

The homogenising efforts, nationalist and populist ideologies from the foundation of the republic onwards, as well as its integration into the capitalist modality beginning after the military coup of 1980, made Turkey open to the rise of neo-liberalism and political Islam in the 1990s and 2000s. In this context, Istanbul has slowly developed into a global city from the 1980s to the 2000s, consolidating its status as a transnational marketplace for global operations. Similar to other global cities which have the potential to attract tourists, the radical urban regeneration programmes have become the common traits of today's urban heritage in Istanbul. Nowadays, the landscape of Istanbul is marked by vast numbers of large shopping malls (Erkip, 2003; Ertekin, Dökmeci

& Ünlükara, 2008; Arslan, Sezer & Işığışok, 2010), gated communities (Geniş, 2007; Akgün & Baycan, 2011), and luxurious hotels (Özer & Saldamlı, 2015).

This specific audience community became activists in response to the increasing homogenising, neo-liberal and Islamist attack on their lives and spaces, which had radical implications for their use of cultural spaces, particularly the IIFF. In this respect, this activist audience community not only reacted to the rise of Islamic neo-liberalism, which manifested itself on the urban spaces the most, but they also embraced an activist cosmopolitan identity in their increasing awareness of and solidarity with marginalised groups in Turkey, especially the Kurds, the Syrian and the LGBTI communities, which the nationalist and increasingly Islamic Turkish state are inflicting violence upon. This is not to say that this thesis isolates their creation of the Emek movement and participation in the uprising to the local and national context in Turkey. It rather examines the political mobilisation of an audience community within the axis of the global Occupy movements around the world and other resistances against repression, neo-liberalism and neocolonialism in the Middle East, such as the Arab Spring⁷.

Therefore, the global framework for the thesis is presented in the second chapter. This chapter traces the role and impact of globalisation in the rise of an Islamist neo-liberal ideology, which provides the main theoretical framework within this research. Following Harvey (2007), I describe neo-liberalism as a globally hegemonic theory that is constituted by privatisation, safeguarding individual property rights, encouraging entrepreneurialism, and limiting the state's roles. In addition to this, neo-liberalism involves the deterioration of working conditions, such as the increase in the number of people with flexible contracts and temporary jobs, thus constituting the urban poor. In order to examine the cultural and social fabric in Turkey, the marriage between globalisation and neo-liberalism, however, would not be sufficient. Therefore this section shows that the supposed incompatibility between Islam, global capitalism and neo-liberalism may be misleading and there is growing research

⁷ For a detailed discussion of the Arab Spring, see section 4 in chapter 2.

on the harmony between Islam and neo-liberalism (Gökarıksel & Secor, 2009, 2010; Rudnyckyj, 2009; Bianchi, 2013).

Against this background, the third section of the second chapter describes Istanbul's globalisation from the 1980s onwards, with specific reference to its radical urban regeneration in the 2000s, during the rise of political Islam and neo-liberalism. Although the global Istanbul has been one of the main projects of all political parties from the early 1980s onwards, political Islam succeeded in its ultimate transformation into a global city. In order to analyse Istanbul's specific globalisation, this section makes use of specific terms like 'informal globalisation', which implies globalisation from underground, illegal and touristic flows (Keyder, 1999). The last section of this chapter demonstrates that globalisation is not only a political project that consolidates the impact of capitalism, especially via global cities, but that it also makes the mobilisation of social movements and resistances easier and more effective. It takes diverse perspectives in situating the Emek movement and the Gezi uprising, not only in their close affinity to the transformations in Istanbul's cityscape but also in their organic relationship with other global movements, as they cannot solely be isolated to the situation in Turkey. It discusses these social movements in relation to the Occupy movements and Arab Spring, which also creates a link between these two seemingly 'irreconcilable' histories of social movements. While some of the previous scholarly work on social movement research sees no opportunity for mobilisation in authoritarian regimes (Foweraker, 1995; Hinnebusch: 2006), this chapter follows a Foucauldian framework (1991: 93), as in 'where there is power, there is always resistance'. The social movements in Istanbul today mainly revolve around spaces and, similar to Duboc's chapter⁸ (2013) on the cultural spaces in Egypt

⁸ Duboc (2013) conducted research in Egypt, among a group of 'secular' intellectuals (writers) in 2007. Duboc argued that political parties were not the centre of gravity of mobilisation, rather oppositional intellectuals emphasised the need for contentious action autonomous from political parties. These writers constructed alternative channels of political expression, for example, the formation of literary groups. To illustrate, intellectuals created symbolic spaces for protests through literary or journalistic writing. This was a response to the deficiencies of traditional activist

before the popular uprising, this section shows that cultural spaces became increasingly politicised within this framework.

The third chapter of the thesis lays out the details of my audience and social movements' ethnography, which illuminates the ensuing chapters. The first section of this chapter articulates the uses of ethnographic methods in film and media studies, which is mainly employed in audience (Rao, 2007; Gillespie, 1995; Morley, 1993) and production studies (Ganti, 2012; Cottle, 2007). In audience research, ethnographic methods are used to have a deeper understanding of the identities of the consumers or users of a given medium, such as that of reality TV shows, adverts or films. Ethnographic methods are also used in film festival research although research on film festivals did not dwell much on ethnographic methods up until the present day (exceptions are Frohlick, 2005; Khorana, 2012; Dickson, 2015). This section shows that an ethnographic perspective on audiences gave me opportunities to benefit from both interviews and participant observation in order to record the audience's relationship with films, events and spaces at the film festival. The axis of this thesis was audience research but as the main intention was to capture an audience community's festival activism, I also employed social movements' ethnography. Ethnographic methods facilitate a deeper understanding of not only audiences but also social movements since social movements and social network activities are fluid and rapidly shifting, thus ethnography can capture significant shifts missed by macro-level analysis.

The third chapter also shows that the methodology I used transformed due to the burst of an uprising, as the initial attempt was to capture social and political festival practices of an audience community and their formation of a small movement; the Emek movement during the festival's time period. While some of the current ethnographic research in social movements revolves around the use of new media by the protestors, and therefore apply online

structures. Thus Duboc claimed that political mobilisation has transformed and moved to different spaces.

ethnographies as a method, especially in order to examine the Arab Spring (Hamdy, 2012; Gerbaudo, 2012; Juris, 2012; Bonilla & Rosa, 2015), another strand of research still concentrates on immersion in the sites of protests within social movements (Escobar, 1998; Cunningham, 1999; Graeber, 2002, Juris, 2008; Plows, 2008). This chapter shows that this thesis was based on fieldwork at the festival and sites of protests, wherein I have embraced an activist approach. In activist ethnographies, as this chapter will clarify, the researcher aims to produce knowledge about social organisation and relations from the perspective of people occupying places of marginality and/or social movements (Bisaillon, 2012). The second section of this chapter discusses the shortcomings of activist research, such as over-identification with social movements, objectivity (Edelman, 2001), and safety (Smeltzer, 2002), while the third section establishes the phases of the fieldwork of the research, which can be summarised as immersion, data collection and writing.

The fourth chapter historicises the cinema and movie-going in Turkey, which is followed by various features of film festival research and the specific situation of the IIFF in this context. The first section of the fourth chapter provides a historical perspective of the cinema in Turkey, concentrating particularly on the exhibition and distribution of films in Istanbul. This chapter not only shows the role of the movie theatres in Istanbul in the history of cinema in Turkey, which is mostly neglected in the histories and theories of cinema in Turkey, except for Akçura's work (2004), but also provides connections to illuminate the background of the emergence of this specific audience within the context of film culture in Turkey, as well as providing connections to important historical landmarks in the cultural and political history of Turkey. For instance, it shows the emergence of Islamic cinema as a reaction to the pro-Western film industry Yeşilçam, which is important to note in order to account for the context of the polarised culture in Turkey. The second section highlights the history of the IIFF within this picture, from its early years to its contemporary culture. While this section historicises the IIFF in relation to the history of cinema in Turkey, it also connects it to global festivals. As an example of this, this section introduces various discussions and theories on the emergence of festivals in Turkey (Yardımcı, 2005; Akser, 2014) and the world (Harbord, 2002; Ooi &

Pedersen, 2010; Turan, 2003; Rüling & Pederson, 2010). The third section of the third chapter advances a critical approach to the Eurocentric gaze on film festivals and the research on them. This section shows that this thesis also criticises the Eurocentric approach to film festivals, which also challenges the Western-centric understandings of research on festivals as well as democracy, social movements and globalisation. This is not to say that only European researchers or audiences have Eurocentric dispositions, as the section also discusses some members of this community who embraced Eurocentric perspectives on their own festival practices, which I argue is related to modernity in Turkey.

The fifth chapter shows the ways in which this audience community engaged with the IIFF as a counter-public sphere during a specific time period in Turkey. The first section discusses the festival audiences' use of film festivals as social spaces, which can lead to their potential to function as political spaces. This part shows my informants' insistence on and loyalty to film festivals, which is not only because of the festival films per se, as they can reach some of these films by streaming and/or downloading, but also because of the festivals' social, cultural and political implications such as their characteristic as events (Peranson, 2008) and their fun and festive atmosphere (Uysal, Gahan and Martin, 1993). The second section situates the film festival within the framework of the public sphere, from a Habermasian perspective. In Habermas' framework (1974, 1991), the public sphere is a mediator between society and state, in which the public organises itself as the bearer of public opinion, engages in rational discussions and becomes actively involved in the decision-making processes. This section embraces a Habermasian perspective but it also includes the critiques over the emphasis of 'the rational' aspect of the public sphere, following Calhoun's (2002) framework. In discussing the IIFF as a public sphere, this section argues that this community's use of the IIFF as a public sphere goes beyond the confines of the bourgeois public sphere and becomes a cultural counter-public sphere, which implies that it is a counter-public to mass media and works as a means to create a public for one's own alternative lifestyle (Wimmer, 2005), especially in periods of instability in the dominant public sphere (Downey & Fenton, 2003).

This section also points to the functioning of specific film festivals such as human rights, queer or radical film festivals as cultural counter-public spheres (Kim, 2005; Dönmez-Colin, 2014; Cordova, 2012; Torchin, 2012; Martinez et al., 2015; Tascón, 2015) but asserts that it depends on the audiences' use of the festivals, not upon the identity of the film festival itself, which makes them counter-public spheres. For some members of this audience community, the IIFF functions as a counter-public sphere because it brings together different actors, it enables discussions and decision-making processes, and it hosts 'difficult' films on taboo issues which go against the logic of the dominant ideology in Turkey, for example, the screening of Kurdish films.

Against this background, the second section of the fifth chapter discusses that in their engagement with this counter-public sphere, this audience community embraced cosmopolitan identities. Cosmopolitanism is a highly popular and much contested concept, which is commonly argued as a consequence of globalisation, as it has lately posed a systematic critique of globalisation (Yılmaz & Trandafoiu, 2015: 2). Although consumerist cosmopolitanism is manifested in the globalisation of tastes and multi-culturalisation of society, which is also tied to the advanced globalisation of capitalism today (Vertovec & Kohen, 2002; Calhoun, 2003), the cosmopolitanism defined in this thesis goes beyond consumerist cosmopolitanism in its depiction of a form of 'cosmopolitanism from below'; an activist cosmopolitanism. Hannerz (1990: 239) defines cosmopolitanism as a willingness to engage with the other, an intellectual and aesthetic stance of openness towards divergent cultural experiences. This stance of openness to different cultural and political experiences results mainly from the exposition of this community to different representations in the films and their engagement with a diversity of people in the spaces of the festival and the protests. This in turn leads to an activist cosmopolitanism, which is a concept that is not commonly associated with activism. This section shows that this community's cosmopolitanism does not come about only through the force of the best argument in the public sphere, but also through people's symbolic recognition of the vulnerable (Chouliaraki, 2013). The main argument of the section is that this audience community, in the context of the cultural counter-public sphere of the

IFFF, recognises others' vulnerability through the increasing number of films and panels on Kurdish, Syrian and LGBTI communities, which went against the dominant ideology in Turkey.

The sixth chapter is an introduction to the remaining discussion of this thesis, which is the core theme of my research; the importance of spaces in this community's attachment to the festival and the uprising. The first section of the chapter relates this audience community's engagement with spaces to their nostalgic feelings. This community's nostalgic feelings originated from their attachment to their past rituals and spaces and I argue that it created a reflective culture of nostalgia, not a restorative one (Boym, 2001). Restorative nostalgia (Boym, 2001) symbolises a nationalist perspective of the past, in a way to idealise the past without criticising it. Although this community embraced a nostalgic perspective of the past, especially the EMT, they felt nostalgia for it as a symbol of togetherness and leftist political mobilisation in Turkey, as even the name of the movie theatre Emek signified Labour. This community's collective memory of these spaces and rituals created a reflective nostalgia culture, which implied the projection of past into the future and an attachment to traditions and urban heritage. In this way, their nostalgic feelings implied the potential to go hand in hand with a protest culture, which goes against the conventional conceptualisation of nostalgia as a concept that is conservative in nature (Gupta & Ferguson, 1992; Allan, Atkinson & Montgomery, 1995; Bennett, 1996; Lefebvre, 1996; Grainge, 1999). Furthermore, this section argues that their nostalgic feelings also originated from a potential regime change, which was not pronounced in a very explicit way in 2013 and 2014, but was in the air.

The second section of the sixth chapter connects the nostalgic feelings of this audience community with their desire to return to a less neo-liberal time and place. This section, therefore, points to their anti-neoliberal feelings and dispositions against various symbols of neo-liberalism at the festival. This ranged from their responses on the flexible and precarious working conditions

in the festival and the festival's promotion of the Lale Card⁹, which discriminated ordinary audiences from 'privileged audiences'. The main discussion of the last section of this chapter is on their anti-neoliberal feelings against the neo-liberalisation of festival spaces. This section revolves around the concepts of cinematic city (Brunsdon, 2012) and festival space (Willems-Braun, 1994; Van Aalst & Van Melik, 2012), which constitute the main point of reference in this audience community's attachment to the IIFF. The discussions in this section also connect to the fourth chapter, as it identifies the IIFF audience's behaviour by reference to various film industries, traditions and exhibition outlets in Istanbul, especially the loss of the large format movie theatres in the face of the new political economy of cinema in Turkey. This community embraced anti-neoliberal discourses against the impact of the urban regeneration and shopping-mallisation of Istanbul's cityscape. Their audience behaviour changed with the loss of the EMT and this section particularly focuses on their mostly negative feelings on the newly added multiplex, the Nişantaşı City's. Within this framework, this audience community started to increasingly feel like automatons within this multiplex. In their discourses against the neo-liberalisation of spaces, my informants aimed to find ways of keeping independent spaces for the future, by simply making use of them, which meant retaining their history for them.

As the main reason behind this audience community's attachment and loyalty to the IIFF is due to their relationship with the spaces, which stemmed from these spaces' underlying signification of sociality, collectivity and politicisation, the seventh and final chapter dwells on the concept of 'right to the city'. The first section of this chapter deals with this concept in depth from its early articulations to contemporary discussions, in the context of what 'claiming the right to the city' signified for this community. In Lefebvre's context (1996), it means to take over and find solutions for urban problems, in order to defeat the penetration of dominant strategies and ideologies. While Lefebvre previously

⁹ The Lale Card is the access card of the IKSŞV, which can be used for all of their festivals, including the IFF. There are five different types of this loyalty card: blue, yellow, red, white and black Lale Cards. All of these cards provide the members with different privileges. For a more comprehensive understanding of the Lale card, see <http://www.lalekart.org> (Accessed 10 February, 2016).

positioned the working classes as the actors of urban social movements, heterogeneous groups of people claim their right to buildings or public spaces in the new social movements. This section shows that 'right to the city' entails the marginalised groups' decision-making in urban spaces (McCann, 2002; Purcell, 2002; Friendly, 2013), 'in a continuously shifting and contested vision of a future city that is actively imagined, struggled and strived for' (Coggin & Pieterse, 2012). This community attempted to claim their right to the EMT in their protests against its demolition. Their spatial activism revolved around the use and occupation of the street that the EMT was based in and the occupation of the EMT right before the uprising. In this way, they actively engaged with the decision-making processes of the publicly owned streets and spaces for their future city, rather than leaving them to the decisions of the state.

The second section of the final chapter advances discussions on the right to the city, which culminated in the Gezi uprising in opposition to the radical urban restructuring programmes and the commodification of urban space (Kuymulu, 2013; Karakayali & Yaka, 2014). The small movements like the Emek movement led to the Gezi uprising as the collective solidarities in small movements taught people to stand together with different groups and to create their own counter-public spheres. The city during the uprising became a dynamic and complex territory whereby different groups with a diversity of concerns intersected. The main discussion in this chapter is that the commodification of urban space through urban restructuring programmes mobilised the small movements like the Emek movement into a much bigger uprising. Through this uprising, this community created a park culture, which implied claiming rights to not only the Gezi Park but also various parks across Istanbul, and Turkey as a whole, in order to initiate alternative organisations such as the neighbourhood collectives or alternative NGOs. These collectives enabled different groups' participation in and engagement with the public spheres and decision-making processes. The 'right to the city' also entailed the right to the media, wherein activists began creating their own media content and using technology as a means for their own ends, which had been the most important features of the contemporary social movements such as the Arab Spring and the Occupy movements. In the Gezi uprising, this community

created more wide-ranging media outlets on their own in order to go beyond the 'penguin media'¹⁰ in Turkey. Their notion of solidarity and understanding of 'occupation' consolidated, as the park culture created solidarity between previously disconnected groups, apart from leading to more awareness on how to keep past spaces into future, how to engage and re-engage with them.

Therefore, the significance of this thesis lies in its portrayal of the glimpses of an ongoing struggle for democracy in the Middle East, which has only recently become a 'popular' area of scholarly study since the Arab Spring (Schumacher, 2011; Bauer, 2013; Tudoroiu, 2013; Dinçer & Kutlay, 2013; Magen, 2014; Dannreuther, 2015; Salamey, 2015). This thesis looks at the film and protest culture within a predominantly Muslim culture. It thus bypasses the Western-centric approach to film festivals and democratic theory. It inverts the common framework of neo-liberalism to be discussed as a Western phenomenon and an oppositional ideology to Islamism. Islamism can actually go hand in hand with neo-liberalism, as neo-liberalism feeds different forms of conservatism and fundamentalism all around the world. Neo-liberalism has also often gone hand in hand with a greater emphasis on fundamentalist Christian values (for example, the restriction of abortion in the US). Considering that Islam and Christianity are sister religions (both have roots in Judaism and both claim a direct relation to Abraham in particular), the essential difference in this form of neo-liberalism and that of Turkey is minimal. The community in question here represents those who fight for a freer, more just, heterogeneous and democratic future in the Middle East as a reaction to the increasing repression of neo-liberalism, hand in hand with Islamism. Furthermore, an international film festival becoming an activist space implies the political mobilisation of different segments of society, which is also important for the history of protest culture, democracy and social movements.

¹⁰ The mainstream media in Turkey has been referred to as 'the penguin media' during and after the OG uprising. There were millions of people protesting the government on the streets, while the TV channels such as the CNN Turk showed documentaries on penguins rather than informing people on what was going on in the country. For more information: <http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2013/jun/09/turkey-mainstream-media-penguins-protests> [Accessed 9 May, 2016].

The conceptual framework of this research might seem borne out of seemingly local concerns in the IIFF scene, the Emek movement and the Gezi uprising, such as the political practices of a local film festival audience or a 'local' resistance to keep a movie theatre and public park, but it is as much global as it is local. The crisis of representation in the Middle East from 2011 onwards (Castells, 2012; Sofos, 2014) mobilised different groups of people across the region in search of their rights in the city, their cultural spaces, and media. Within this framework, festivals can function as counter-public spheres due to their 'activist' cosmopolitan resonances and the fact that they are tied to the social movements in their hosting cities. The 'bottom up' perspective of an insider is also a useful addition to the debates, as it was not a distant other to provide an analysis of the social movements in Istanbul. The diverse theoretical perspectives on the relationship between festivals merging with social movements in the face of the globalisation of neo-liberalism and Islamism bring to the field of democratic theory and political science a fresh critique of Eurocentric understandings of globalisation and neo-liberalism.

Chapter 2

The Contemporary Political Context of Turkey: Between Islamist Neo- Liberalism and New Social Movements

2.1.Introduction

In order to have a deeper understanding of the radically shifting film festival scene and the politicisation of a specific film festival audience community, first, I will examine the recent political background in Turkey. This audience community became an activist community and transformed the festival space into a counter-public sphere as a reaction to the neo-liberal and Islamist politics in Turkey, which is related to globalisation. This chapter advances discussions on the meanings of globalisation today, especially in its relation to neo-liberalism and the rise of political Islam. The first section accounts for Turkey's globalisation, with particular reference to neo-liberalism's marriage with Islamism and informal globalisation in Turkey. The second section historicises Istanbul's specific globalisation from the 1980s onwards, which marks the aftermath of the severe military intervention in Turkey. Istanbul becoming a global city reached its peak in the 2000s during the AKP period, as since the 2000s the Istanbul municipality has been run with the help of the government of the AKP. Istanbul's globalisation can be defined with the arrival of shopping malls, convention venues, five star hotels, highways and gentrified neighbourhoods in the centre of Istanbul.

After a seemingly 'negative' strand of discussions on the implications of globalisation, the last section of this chapter discusses that globalisation also creates a wide-ranging global resistance and social movements around the world, especially against the impact of neo-liberalism. This section connects the Emek movement and the Gezi uprising to other 'new' global social movements in the 2010s such as the Occupy movements and the Arab Spring. This theoretical chapter intends to shed light on the film festival activism of an audience community in a specific time period, which represents the search for democracy and human rights in the Middle East.

2.2.Globalisation and Islamist Neo-liberalism in Turkey

Globalisation is not an easily-definable concept as it is intertwined with modernity, tradition, neo-liberalism, transnationalism, cosmopolitanism and many other phenomena. In this section, in order to understand the IIFF audiences' politicisation, I will point out the specific form of globalisation in Turkey, which revolves around the notions of 'informal globalisation' and 'strong state tradition'. This indicates that the state still retained its position in Istanbul's globalisation. In order to understand the contemporary happenings in Turkey and the shifting identities of this particular audience community, I will then interrogate the relationship between globalisation and neo-liberalism, but this relationship would not be sufficient in order to understand Turkey's cultural fabric and political agenda, as Islamism's role and position within this framework and the kinship between neo-liberalism and Islamism are also vital. In 2006, Habermas maintained that there is a restoration of religious movements globally, which he calls the 'political revitalisation of religion' (Habermas: 2006: 1). I argue that the revitalisation of religion owes much to the structure of late capitalism as it cannot be understood as separate from the increasing impact of neo-liberalism.

In this thesis, I define globalisation as fed by the 'global capitalism' perspective, the theories that relate globalisation to space and place, and also theories of global culture, as in the concept that globalisation intensified the pace and impact of social movements. First, I wish to account for globalisation's close affinity with global capitalism and neo-liberalism. 'The globalisation is both a result and a medium of neo-liberalism: it results (to a great extent) from capital being freed of national boundaries by neoliberal politics, and it shapes the conditions which are favourable for further neoliberal restructuring' (Köhler & Wissen, 2003: 946). As capital is free from the boundaries of nation states, investments of multinational corporations have become easier, which changed the structure of the economy as well as culture globally. The neo-liberal restructuring of different countries happened through the operations of multinational corporations, international treaties and pacts. In discussing the relationship between globalisation and neo-liberalism, I do not regard them

solely on economic grounds because 'neo-liberalism is more than a bundle of economic policies and should also be understood as a political rationality' (Karaman, 2013: 3). I thus employ neo-liberalism as a cultural and political concept which signals a particular period in history.

Harvey (2005: 2) defines neo-liberalism as a policy which suggests that 'human well-being can be advanced by liberating individual entrepreneurial freedoms and skills within an institutional framework, characterised by strong private property'. The freedom to invest and possess constitute the underlying logic of the current neo-liberal system, which sets the condition for all other principles guiding our social, political and economic lives. 'Neo-liberal ideology aims to extend market discipline, competition, and commodification throughout all sectors of society. In this context, neoliberal doctrines justify the deregulation of state control over industries, assault on organised labour, shrink and/or privatise public services, dismantle welfare programmes, enhance international capital mobility, intensify competition, and criminalise the urban poor' (Brenner & Theodore, 2002: 350). Neo-liberalism is a political philosophy and programme which further weakens the welfare system in which deregulation of state control over all sectors of society reached its peak and competition became the logic of people's everyday lives. Brenner and Theodore's definition (2002) also throws light on its reflection on people, especially the worsening conditions of the urban poor. Today, economic inequality has impacted upon much wider socio-economic classes, which has resulted in wider social problems for everyone. Some of these problems are due to 'the explosive growth of the scope and intensity of punishment' in this new age (Wacquant, 2009: xvi). The gap between the rich and poor also reached its peak in the neo-liberal era, which resulted in mass numbers of poor people in urban contexts. In order to facilitate its continuity, neo-liberal ideologies appropriated technology for its own purposes and created a 'surveillance society' in which not only certain institutions but also people's daily lives and minds are also regulated according to market principles (Foucault, 2010: 67).

In this way, neo-liberalism wages war on democracy, public institutions, public goods and non-commodified values. The neo-liberal economy with its

relentless pursuit of market values now extends to human relations while citizenship has increasingly become a function of market values (Giroux & Giroux, 2009: 2). People's relationship with each other and to the state are also organised through market values, which have become the norm of society today. Chomsky (1999) explains neo-liberalism as 'capitalism with the gloves off', which is not only an economic but also a cultural and political system. In Chomsky's framework, neo-liberalism seemingly relies on formal electoral democracy, but elections only reflect market principles (Chomsky, 1999: 9-11). The seemingly democratic but, in truth, authoritarian electoral systems guarantee the participation in decision-making process and freedom to invest in and possess consumer goods for only a few upper-class people/groups and work for their interests.

Second, globalisation has a kinship to not only the rise and impact of neo-liberalism, but also the rise of political Islam. Earlier perspectives on political Islam tend to situate it as a reactionary movement against modernity or globalisation (Burgat & Dowell, 1993; Lewis, 2001). There are also accounts which position political Islam against global capitalism. To illustrate, Barber (1995: 18) counter-poses the McWorld and the Jihad-World, maintaining that 'the forces of Jihad and the forces of McWorld operate with equal strength in opposite directions, the one driven by parochial hatreds, the other by universalizing markets. They have one thing in common: neither offers much hope to citizens looking for practical ways to govern themselves democratically'. In Barber's framework, neither political Islam nor global capitalism can promise democracy for the future.

At the other end of the spectrum, Göle (2003) discusses how 'contemporary fundamentalist movements are an outcome of modernity, rather than an outcome of unchanged traditions and religion. Islamist movements select and reinterpret the religious canon throughout their confrontation with issues of modern society, such as modern life, the secular public sphere and market economy'. For Göle, 'Islamist movements bear similarities to contemporary social movements of the West, such as feminism' (Göle, 2003: 18). In an almost oppositional approach to Barber (1995), Göle (2003) identifies

a democratic potential in Islamist movements in showing their correlation to modernity and 'Western' social movements. To illustrate, anti-capitalist Muslims in Turkey and similar groups could be referenced, which represents a minority group in Turkey. These groups actively participated in the Gezi uprising side by side with socialists, anarchists, and feminists, apart from creating an alternative modernity. However, even the example of the anti-capitalist muslims participation in the uprising goes against Göle's argument, as this minority group does not describe itself as 'Islamist'. From a different, but similar perspective, Zubaida (2000: 75) defines the rise of political Islam in relation to the Cold War from a historical perspective. In this context, the 'Islamic Left' was seen as a socialist threat within the Cold War era. Zubaida's perspective attributes a socialistic potential to some of the Islamist movements, which, in this approach, was blocked by the tension between the USA and Russia during the Cold War.

The above descriptions of political Islam, which posits it in opposition to modernity (Lewis, 2001, Burgat and Dowell, 1993), as opposed to global capitalism (Barber, 1995), as a case of 'alternative modernity', or a social movement like feminism (Göle, 2003), and in reference to the hegemonic powers of the world such as the actions of Russia or the USA (Zubaida, 2000), account for the complexity of Islamist movements but fall short of pointing out its close affinity with neo-liberalism. Political Islam embraces economic globalisation, as it is evident in the cases of Indonesia, Saudi Arabia and Turkey. As Bianchi (2013) rightly observes, economic development in the Islamic world has moved decisively into the capitalist mainstream. 'Even countries that previously experimented with state-led import substitution and autarky are now driven largely by private and foreign firms producing for export and tied to international finance and transport. The rapid emergence of a specialised industry of Islamic financial services tailored to the religious tastes and nationalist sentiments of millions of middle class consumers, savers, and investors' (Bianchi, 2013: 4). In this regard, the common belief that Islam would not be compatible with global capitalism is wrong, since the Islamic countries have adopted the market economy of neo-liberalism.

There is growing research on different aspects of the marriage between Islam and neo-liberalism (Gökarıksel & Secor, 2008; Rudnycky, 2009a, 2009b; Gökarıksel; 2012; Göçmen, 2014). To illustrate, Rudnycky's research (2009), which is based on an ethnography of Krakatau Steel in Indonesia, discusses that the creation of a spiritual economy in Indonesia is 'neither a wholesale translation of Weber's spirit of capitalism, nor is it a strict interpretation of Islamic texts and practices. It is as much the Islamisation of neo-liberalism as it is the neo-liberalisation of Islam' (Rudnycky, 2009b: 131). For Rudnycky, the convergence of religious ethics and business management knowledge illustrate the formation of 'spiritual economies', which is a combination of Islamic ethics and Western management knowledge that is expected to enhance economic productivity, reduce endemic corruption, and prepare employees of state-owned enterprises for privatization. In this mutual relationship, Islam appropriates features of neo-liberalism, while neo-liberalism is enhanced by the use of Islamic ethics. In another article, Rudnycky (2009a) calls the same process, 'market Islam', which is a combination of religious practice and business management knowledge, a fusion of business management, life-coaching, and self-help principles with Islamic history and examples from the life of the Prophet Muhammad. Market Islam refers to how Islamic practices are mobilized to facilitate the transition from an authoritarian regime of state-fostered development to organising labour and commercial activity according to market principles (Rudnycky, 2009a: 185). Rudnycky's ethnographic observations, within a predominantly Muslim country, account for the practical use of Islamic principles in a work environment whilst pointing to the harmony of Islamism and global capitalism.

Similar to the Indonesian case, two major socio-economic currents in the Turkish political sphere shaped the period following the coup d'état of 1980: the liberalisation of the economy and the rise of political Islam. The concurrence of these two dynamics fuelled the proliferation of religiously motivated civil society associations in Turkey (Göçmen, 2014: 95-96) as well as corporations (Gökarıksel & Secor, 2008). Increasingly in the 2000s, Islamism has become compatible with economic neo-liberalism and the Islamic classes have become the new bourgeoisie in Turkey. 'This structural transformation in the economy

brought with it a series of important changes in the social and political arenas. The first is the appearance of an Islamist bourgeoisie' (Balkan, Balkan & Öncü, 2015: 2). The Islamic financial services in Turkey invested mostly in the construction sector, which mainly consists of the construction of shopping malls, residences, studios and hotels. 'In addition to real estate, leading capital groups of the Islamist bourgeoisie also invest heavily in textiles and energy' (Tanyılmaz, 2015: 111). From the 1990s onwards, apart from the Islamist bourgeoisie's investments in different sectors, which created and consolidated the rise of the Islamist bourgeoisie, the visibility and participation of these communities in everyday life and public spheres have shaped the cultural and social fabric of Turkey.

As an example of Muslims' participation in previously 'secular' spaces, based on her fieldwork in the Akmerkez shopping mall from 1996 onwards, Gökarıksel (2012: 9) discusses that her headscarf-wearing research participants were made to feel out of place by the discriminatory behaviour of the service personnel and fellow shoppers in the 1990s, but in the 2000s, shopping malls became more smoothly incorporated into daily urban life and turned into the popular destination of a new Islamic bourgeoisie and an aspiring Islamic middle class. As I discussed in the introduction chapter, the 'secular modernity' not only 'Turkified' the culture in Turkey, but also opposed religious symbols, a situation which changed after the military intervention. Shopping malls thus transformed from 'secular spaces' into hybrid spaces in the 1990s, which embraced the secular and modern as well as Islamist identities, in their integration of Islamic facilities like small mosques within them.

In their research on one of the leading companies of the veiling fashion industry, called Tekbir, Gökarıksel and Secor (2008) articulate how contemporary Islamic entrepreneurs operate within a neoliberal modality cast as Islamic, from its origins to ethical principles and ultimate goals. 'As Islamic entrepreneurs formulate new forms of Islamic neo-liberalism, they also reinterpret and transform Islamic values and practice to suit the imperatives of capitalism and the changing economic and cultural landscape, including the desires of the newly emergent devout middle class' (Gökarıksel & Secor, 2008:

13). While formulating a new form of Islamic neo-liberalism, the Islamic institutions and industries transformed Islamic values and culture through the appropriation of capitalist values, such as the capitalist work ethic or the shopping mall culture. In this regard, neo-liberalism's marriage with Islamism not only rested on a common 'economic' formula of market economy, but transformed the culture and social interactions of people. Similarly, Işık (2014) also conducted research in various cities in Turkey between 2004 and 2009, and documented how gendered individual religious practices are conjoined to transnational business competition, changing labour conditions, and broader projects of economic transformation, which she defines as a unique Turkish assemblage of faith, religious practice, charitable giving, and flexibility of labour. The above publications (Gökarıksel & Secor, 2008; Işık, 2014) account for the linkages between pious practice and economic behaviour, particularly in Turkey, which indicates that the religious values are in harmony and coalesced with neo-liberalism, thus creating a 'market Islam'.

In order to provide a historical perspective, I need to point out that the Islamist neo-liberalism in Turkey did not start with the AKP government, but during Özal¹¹'s period, after the coup d'état of 1980. The Islamist bourgeoisie evolved out of the state's neoliberal economic policies that created conducive economic conditions and the emerging transnational financial networks, as a result of deregulation and the international aspect of the Turkish economy. The Islamic bourgeoisie has also benefited from the local governments of the Welfare Party¹², especially after 1994. The Welfare Party was the first party to adopt political Islam as its direct aim, which was a direct outcome of the neoliberal economic policies of Özal's era. 'This transformation of Turkey's

¹¹ Turgut Özal was the reformist Turkish prime minister and president who died in 1993. He was politically active between 1979 and 1993. He served as the state minister during the military rule between 1980 and 1982.

¹² The Welfare party (RP) was an Islamist party of the 1980s and 1990s in Turkey, which gained popularity during the 1990s. The founding members of the AKP were members of the previous Welfare Party, such as Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and Abdullah Gül.

Islamic movement could be called a conservative revolution because it wants to maintain Turkey's generally conservative traditions and bring local norms and identities to the national level; it is a normative revolution in that it seeks to moralise the political institutions and networks' (Yavuz, 2006: 7). This conservative movement in the 1990s paved the way for the wholesale transformation of society, as well as the state in Turkey in the 2000s.

Under Erdoğan's AKP government, between 2002-2014, economic policies became increasingly neoliberal, leading to further consolidation of this mode of capital accumulation (Tanyılmaz, 2015: 111). Upon assuming office in the November 2002 national elections, the AKP strictly adhered to the IMF-supervised crisis management programme that had begun in April 2001, which was initiated by the previous administration in the wake of one of the most severe economic crises in Turkey's history. 'The AKP-crafted "Public Administration Reform" (PAR) bill, which justified the need for a radical market-oriented reform of public administration. It states that the goal of opening up to the global economy through a strategy that relied on competitiveness and free market principles was successfully implemented up until the 1990s' (Karaman, 2013: 5). AKP's neoliberalism is marked by the transformation of the legal structures that govern workers' rights, length of the working week, pension rights, social security, and many others that turned Turkey's growing population into a flexible labour force. In this period, massive privatization of virtually everything that makes profit has been the norm. Moreover, Erdoğan always looked to promote Turkish capital as a neoliberal force in the global market (Kuymulu, 2013: 277).

Nowadays, the AKP party is still the ruling party after Tayyip Erdoğan became the president of Turkey in 2014. While the discussions revolve around the transformation of the constitution and the system into a presidential system today, the culture of Sunni Islam, hand in hand with the consolidation of the neo-liberal culture, constitute the cultural fabric in Turkey. 'Islamic values, habits, customs and rituals have become more visible and widely adopted. Some examples include the proliferation of Islamic TV channels and Islamic newspapers (both in terms of the number of newspapers and their share of

readership) and the emergence of an Islamic fashion industry' (Gökarıksel & Secor, 2010). Political Islam not only permeated the bureaucracy of Turkey, such as state institutions, it also transformed the everyday culture of Turkey, for example, hotels suited for Muslims or the Islamic fashion industry. Additionally 'the government's limitations on alcohol consumption, more references being made to the Quran and Islamic sources in daily speech, and the increasing practice of sex segregation in daily life, such as the proliferation of women-only hotels, swimming pools and public parks could also be exemplified' (Karaman, 2013: 8).

As it is a transformative period, which Erdoğan now calls the transition from a republican regime to 'another regime', it radically affects the everyday lives and identities of the citizens of Turkey. Therefore, Turkey's globalisation is a specific globalisation within the efforts to privatise all that was left as public, such as the parks, squares, beaches, within a framework of increasingly Islamised culture, via increasingly Islamist education and media. The rise of the conflict between the secular and Sunni Islamist as well as the conflict between Turks and Kurds stemmed from the AKP's underlying intention to represent the Sunni Islamist Turks alone. Although the AKP period marks the culmination of authoritarian politics in Turkey, it also inherited its politics from the previous governments in the history of the republic, which has long relied on the use of populist religious discourses and Turkification.

2.3.Istanbul's Globalisation through Islamist Neo-Liberalism

The most important aspect of globalisation, with respect to the context of this thesis, is that globalisation has radically changed the structure and culture in urban settings. Globalisation resulted in the transformation of main cities in the world into the economic centres of the world, bypassing the national boundaries. Istanbul is one of them. Istanbul's economic globalisation can partly be described in a similar way to conventional global cities such as Hong Kong,

Hamburg or Manchester. However, the Turkish state's specific characteristics turned Istanbul into a different global city, the implications of which will be the foci of this section. Nowadays 'many national governments are eager to transform their leading cities – usually capital cities – into 'global cities' (Machimura, 1998). Istanbul has been one of these leading cities, one which slowly developed into a global city from the 1980s to the 2000s and consolidated its status as a transnational market place for global operations. Similar to other global cities which have the potential to attract tourists' attention, the radical urban regeneration programmes have become the common traits of today's urban heritage in Istanbul. These programmes aim to bulldoze historical and cultural quarters of cities, in an attempt to transform these spaces into shopping malls, student housing, studios or office spaces. Istanbul experienced the process of 'bulldozer neo-liberalism' even more brutally (Lovering & Türkmen, 2011). The bulldozer neo-liberalism operated all around the city, from the peripheries to the centre of Istanbul, in order to transform it not only as a centre of commerce, tourism and business, but also to show that it is part of a brand new era/regime. This not only implied the mushrooming of skyscrapers, studios, and shopping malls, but also the destruction of historical neighbourhoods such as Tarlabası and Sulukule, which consisted of a variety of historical buildings as well as the houses of ethnic communities such as the Roman and the Alawite. This gentrification meant that thousands were displaced.

Neo-liberal regimes increasingly use cities as the representations of their power in the sense that the flow of information and money are controlled via these global cities. Cities, according to Peck & Tickell (2002), are at the forefront of neo-liberalism today. Cities and inter-urban networks seem to replace states as the basic territorial infrastructure of capitalist development (Brenner, 1998: 4-5). The states acquire power through their global cities such as Istanbul, which is the centre of economic capital and culture in Turkey. Contemporary cities operate as the 'organising nodes' of world capitalism, as 'articulations' of regional, national and global commodity (Friedmann, 1995: 21–26). Capitalism is organised and consolidated through the flow of commodities in these cities. As an example of this, in order to stabilise neo-liberalism,

intervention at the urban scale has been considered equally essential, as this is where neo-liberalism has its most significant economic, political and social impacts on everyday life (Jessop, 2002: 470). In this regard, global cities do not only signify economic control and the flow of commodities, knowledge and economic capital, but they are also organising nodes of cultural flow in the world.

Global cities are also discussed as strengthening the impact of cultural imperialism, such as the case of the global spread of the shopping mall culture. As Sassen remarks, international or transnational has become a form of Americanisation (Sassen, 2000: 375). Globalisation can create an international culture, which is fed by Americanisation, the McDonaldisation or in this thesis' framework; the shopping-mallisation. 'Shopping malls are products of global capitalism, particularly the economic liberalisation' (Gökarıksel, 2012: 7). They strengthen the global expansion of capitalist economy as well as culture. For Ringmar (2005: 11-12), 'instead of living in a society, we live in a gigantic shopping mall because everything is commodified. In an ever deeper market, an ever larger range of goods and services are being bought and sold. The activities previously thought of as off-limits to markets are now within these markets and part of the shopping culture.' To illustrate this, Ringmar (2005), who also coined the term shopping-mallisation, uses the illegal but growing market in body parts such as kidneys, which exemplifies the reality of the 'shopping-mallisation' of society that permeates our everyday lives. According to Hamelink (2011), the mallisation of the city does not provide optimal conditions for the communicative city and diversity is negated in it because of its Disney Park-type lifestyle. In this context, there are serious limits to speech and privacy in the private space of the mall. Although Gökarıksel's research (2012) shows that there are a variety of different cultures in shopping malls, their dominance over other spaces in cities can create a homogeneous culture.

Although globalisation has radically transformed Turkey's local dynamics, the Turkish state retains its interventionist and authoritarian character, as it has long been known for its strong state tradition, which is closely related to the specific feature of Istanbul's globalisation. Keyman and Koyuncu (2005) relate

the 'strong-state tradition' to Turkish modernisation since the beginning of the republic. The strong state tradition implies that the state has assumed the capacity of acting almost completely independently from civil society, and second, that the state, rather than the government, has constituted the primary context of politics (Keyman & Koyuncu, 2005: 109). Although Keyman and Koyuncu (having written this in 2005) discussed that the strong state tradition was subject to change in the 1990s due to the emergence of new actors, new mentalities and new languages of modernisation, I want to suggest that the strong state tradition was consolidated in the 2000s and Istanbul became its powerhouse. Istanbul's becoming a powerhouse in the 2000s implied that its urban transformation was isolated from the participation of civil societies and other new actors, which the projects aimed at the 'moving' of the EMT and the renewal of the Gezi Park exemplified.

Parallel to this discussion, Keyder (2011) draws attention to the divergence of Istanbul's globalisation from the Western global cities. For Keyder (1999), Istanbul's development can be defined as informal globalisation, which means that Istanbul initially experienced a globalisation period from underground; from illegal and touristic flows (Keyder, 1999: 15). Keyder defines the informal globalisation of Istanbul (in the 1990s) with reference to money laundering, extensive prostitution involving women from Russia, Ukraine, the Caucasus and the Balkans and the growth of organised crime and mafia (Olson, 2002: 364-365). Istanbul's globalisation is a unique form of globalisation, even if there are similarities to other global cities. The population incessantly complains about the unfinished state of their city, its infrastructural insufficiencies, its unplanned growth and the inadequacy of services. Municipal bodies lack transparency; participatory mechanisms that involve citizens in their city's business are completely absent. Put differently, 'incompleteness is not a characteristic that categorises Istanbul as an Oriental and Third World city as some would claim, but remains indispensable in orienting the city to the future' (Göktürk, Soysal & Türeli, 2010: 37). Furthermore 'Istanbul is not as a city of permanent lives but a city of and for migrants or strangers, who came in search of better fortunes, or of uprooted Istanbulites, now living elsewhere. These impermanent lives enable a convergence of perspectives, looking at the city

simultaneously as insider and outsider' (Göktürk, Soysal & Türeli, 2010: 46). The mass immigration of the Kurdish in the 1990s and the Syrians at present is an example of this. In the growing chaos, increasing unequal distribution of resources and radical transformation of the cityscape, people cannot start permanent lives in Istanbul.

However, the global cities hypothesis (even when it theorises a non-Western global city from a perspective of the informal global city) in a way suggests that globalisation is a natural, irresistible and inevitable process. For Markusen (1999), this very vagueness allowed politicians to legitimise certain decisions. 'The global city discourse functions ideologically because it offers a seductive view of the future and a ready-made set of policy tools to bring about the transformation into a global city' (Öktem, 2011: 29-30). The discussion of metropolitan cities' natural and inevitable transformation into global cities ignores the fact that globalisation is predominantly a political project.

Historically, the project of the global Istanbul with a top-down strategy has been a shared ideal of all political parties from social democrats to right-wing parties with religious agendas. It started in 1984, when Bedrettin Dalan became the mayor of the Metropolitan Municipality of Istanbul, which lasted until 1989. 'Mayor Dalan's aim was to transform Istanbul from a tired city whose glory resided in its past history, into a metropolis full of promise for the twenty-first century' (Keyder & Öncü, 1993: 29). Although Istanbul's becoming of a global city is more visible in the present day, during the rise of political Islam, Istanbul has been the most important target of all political parties from the 1980s onwards. Although their approaches and styles have been different, 'all political parties, from the early 1980s, had thought that Istanbul has already been fragmented in an irreversible manner and needs managerial and financial strategies to survive' (Bora, 1997). These managerial and financial strategies as survival strategies mainly involved the top-down urban renewal programmes in Istanbul, especially in the historical and touristic parts of Istanbul.

Keyder (2005) contends that at the beginning of the 1980s Istanbul was a typical third world city, which was marked by its crowd and dilapidation, more

than any other characteristics. In the late 1980s, it was already being designed as a tourist attraction and a capital of commerce. A series of policy documents and declarations since the advent of a more 'neo-liberal' approach to economic management in Turkey in the early 1980s have insisted on the importance of making the city more 'global' and thereby more attractive to international flows of investment and consumer spending (especially tourism) (Öktem, 2011: 28).

This implied 'the arrival of shopping malls, gated communities, five-star hotels, office buildings, and world brands. In addition, the city is designed as a consumption artefact for tourists, the old neighbourhoods are gentrified whereby world images on billboards and shop windows are considerably obvious' (Öncü, 1997: 70). These transformations in the structure of the city slowly changed the urban culture, beginning from the 1980s. However, Aksoy claims (2008; 2012) that in the 1980s and throughout the 1990s, this global vision achieved only partial and piecemeal results. 'The various shopping malls, residential complexes and commercial headquarters that started to spring up on the edges of the city, remained for the most part isolated and scattered projects of the city's globalising elite. Istanbul thus entered the new millennium only as an aspiring, partially achieved, global metropolis—as a dual and divided city' (Aksoy, 2012). The top-down projects related to urban structure contributed to the already existing economic inequality in the city.

After Dalan, the current president of Turkey, Tayyip Erdoğan, became the mayor of Istanbul in 1994. Erdoğan, who was in 1994 the first avowedly Islamist mayor of Istanbul, explained his approach to the global city concept as follows: 'Istanbul is a global city, which is accepted and appreciated not only by the world but also the prophet Mohammed. Istanbul should have an Islamic identity' (Öktem, 2011: 36). The blending of Islamist and neo-liberal ideologies were evident in Erdoğan's speeches and actions as a mayor from the 1990s. Kadir Topbaş followed Erdoğan's mayorship in 2004, which still continues and is similar to Erdoğan's mayorship, as they are both members of the AKP government. There is, however, a significant difference between Dalan's, Erdoğan's and Topbaş's eras. What, today, makes mayor Topbaş's vision of a globalising Istanbul more decisive and more authoritarian is 'the massive

support it is now getting from central government in Ankara. This is what distinguishes the present-day scope and scale of urban transformation from the previous regimes of liberalisation and opening of Istanbul to the global economy. Globalisation is a central mission of the AKP government, and Istanbul is the privileged arena of operation' (Aksoy, 2012: 97-98). Beyoğlu stood in the centre of all these characteristics of Istanbul, as it became the most prominent arena of operation during the AKP period.

Slightly different from the majority of other 'historic' or 'touristic' parts of the city, Beyoğlu used to be an alternative space for the lifestyle and consumption of 'marginal' identities like punks, ethnic and gender communities. Starting from the 2000s and largely in the 2010s, neo-liberalism transformed it into a tourist artefact where a lot of global chains replaced the local shops and historical sites. The rise of political Islam also led to 'the limits on the consumption and selling of alcoholic beverages, the transference of all urban spaces into commercial undertakings, the bans on drinking and eating outside in Beyoğlu, the police's enforced removal of people sitting in front of the Galata Tower, the warning of the bus driver to the kissing couple on a public bus and their subsequent injury, the incidents of the AKM¹³ and Emek, and the cutting down of trees in the Gezi Park' (Özbay & Bartu Candan, 2014: 14). As these examples of changes in the 2000s illustrate, Beyoğlu's transformation not only implied an economic but also a cultural transformation. To put it differently, as Beyoğlu was home to alternative identities in Istanbul, its transformation into a centre of global chain stores implied internal migration and even the loss of these cultures.

To conclude this section, I articulated Istanbul's globalisation via focusing on the impact of the current authoritarian neo-liberal regime that is at the same time 'Islamic, conservative and globalist' (Moudouros, 2014). Istanbul's globalisation has been different from its 'Western' counterparts in the sense that

¹³ The AKM was one of the most important cultural centres in Beyoğlu. It was opened in 1969 as a centre for opera, dance, theatre, exhibitions and cinema. It was closed down in 2008. It has since been empty and not been in use, which created negative reactions.

Turkey is a predominantly Muslim country, the globalisation of Istanbul happened through 'informal globalisation' and the ultimate urban regeneration of Istanbul has increasingly been via 'political Islamist' agendas, due to the efforts of the Islamist neo-liberal governing party AKP. Apart from the informal globalisation process, the globalisation process in Istanbul could be defined as an 'Islamic global city project' centred on Islamising the City, especially in the current day (Öktem, 2011: 35). The Islamic global city of Istanbul implied the increasing penetration of mosques in the centres and new centres, the boom of the neo-Ottoman style, especially within the interiors of hotels and other spaces and the lessening numbers of alternative spaces for different religious ethnic groups as well as sub-cultural communities, other than Sunni Turks. These Islamic spaces mixed with and are in harmony with the 'Western' style shopping malls, studios, concert and convention venues, and chain stores. The tensions between Islamist and secular groups in Turkey have been an important feature of the culture in Turkey, and increasingly so, which also shapes the ways this community engaged in Istanbul.

2.4.Globalisation from Below: New Social Movements

Istanbul is a fractured city in the sense that it is defined by top-down conservative changes as well as bottom-up social movements, against these transformations. It is not only the globalisation of Turkey and Istanbul from above that triggered the radical transformation of the film festival culture and this particular audience community, but the merging of the IIFF with social movements in Beyoğlu. As I discussed in the previous section, global cities, for example, the Western ones like New York or London or the Islamic and neo-liberal ones like Cairo or Istanbul, are the most fundamental geographical units for the accumulation of power and capital today. Nevertheless, they are also the centres of social movements against the accumulation of power and capital, which are in the hands of the few. In this context, it is not very important whether this 'few' represented the white-male conservative capitalism of the Western society (as in the case of David Cameron in London) or the father figures of the Islamist neo-liberalism in the Middle East (as in the case of

Erdoğan or el-Sisi). The increasingly authoritarian characteristic of the Turkish Islamist neo-liberalism, which transformed Istanbul from above, consolidated the already existing inequalities between rich and poor, Turk and Kurd, men and women or LGBTI people, branded cities into corporations (Kanna, 2010), deteriorated working conditions and polarised the society even more irreversibly (not only based on class distinctions but also based on religious, gender and ethnic orientation). For different but related reasons, vast numbers of people mobilised in Istanbul, especially from 2010 onwards, against these transformations from above. These activists had common concerns about the local problems, stemming particularly from the policies and cultural transitions of the AKP era, but they also shared in global values and pro-Western lifestyles.

Social movement studies have long implicitly assumed that there is almost no opportunity for mobilisation in authoritarian regimes (Foweraker, 1995; Hinnebusch: 2006), which stems from a Eurocentric standpoint of social movements. I consider these approaches as Eurocentric because if researchers do not conduct research in authoritarian contexts, the only remaining option for further research would be to research on Europe or the USA. In this framework, social movements were described with reference to and as conditioned by the type of regime they challenge. Following Foucault (1982: 793), I argue that 'power relations have become more and more under state control. Power relations have been progressively governmentalised, that is to say, elaborated, rationalised, and centralised in the form of, or under the auspices of, state institutions'. For Foucault (1982), the regimes and the governmentalised forms of power have no doubt impacted on people's daily lives and social movements. However, social movements can originate in different contexts, especially in authoritarian settings, since authoritarianism can mobilise different segments of society against the increasing effects of control and power mechanisms. 'Locating all change outside the social movements neglects large categories of social change and the agency of members' (Baylouny, 2013: 86). As Baylouny (2013) rightly points out, the abovementioned accounts denied the agency of people in authoritarian settings, because the agency was implicitly granted to seemingly more democratic settings. Della Porta (2013: 137) also discusses that beyond the type of regime and its strength, the style of repression is a

particularly relevant dimension in theorising social movements. The particular style of repression can create social movements and uprisings, as it did during the 2010s in Turkey. In this thesis, the influence of particular globalisation from above in Turkey is central to the understanding of the existing radical transformations; however, to think that authoritarian periods would destroy the agency of the people and the emergence of various forms of resistances and social movements would be simplistic.

Foucault (1991) rightly asserted that power is everywhere and it is governmentalised; not because it embraces everything, but because it comes from everywhere (Foucault 1991: 93). However, in declaring that power embraces everything, Foucault did not create a pessimistic picture as he also theorised power in its ability to create resistance. In Foucault's own words (1991: 95-96), 'Where there is power, there is resistance, and yet, or rather consequently, this resistance is never in a position of exteriority in relation to power. There is a plurality of resistances, each of them a special case. By definition, they can only exist in the strategic field of power relations'. In embracing a Foucauldian approach, I discuss how the power mechanisms of authoritarian states and/or institutions are the very reasons behind the increasing impact and density of social movements today, which also transform the meaning and impact of cultural spaces like film festivals.

In Turkey, the most wide-ranging attempt to restore the agency, citizenship and democracy in Turkey (at least, since the coup in 1980) occurred during one of the most authoritarian periods where power is now governmentalised to the fullest extent in the history of Turkey. The appeal of the AKP's repression and its rationalisation of the use of power have increased throughout the period of my research, not only while I was capturing the data, but even more so while I was writing about it, but this did not prevent people from finding various ways to go against and beyond it. My informants had to deal with different (and increasingly more violent) types of repression. Although the type of regime determines the ways people cope with it and resist, we need to look at the practices of people in coping with the repression, rather than focusing solely on the regime's 'ultimate' power.

On the one hand, the rise of fundamentalism in Turkey, the violent intervention of the state against its own citizens and the case of the activism of the film festival audience may, on the surface, seem to announce the death of globalisation as we know it. This stems from the fact that the passage to an authoritarian regime, which Turkey has experienced over the past few years, has the potential to result in a remote and isolated society. However, the recent rise and promotion of conservative ideologies and, accordingly, governments, have also been a global phenomenon (even if in different forms and styles), not only in Turkey and the Middle East but also in England, other parts of Europe and in other continents. For instance, the immigration reform plans of the Conservative party government in Britain, the EU's refugee deal with Turkey, the bombing of Iraq and Syria, and the rise of the extreme right wing parties in Sweden or Austria show that Europe is not exempt from the current rise of the conservative/neo-colonialist ideologies. On the other hand, in this seemingly rather pessimistic picture, wide-ranging and powerful social movements also arise worldwide against the increase of authoritarianism and neo-liberalism.

The study of new social movements has been an important area and has influenced many disciplines, in addition to initiating social, political and cultural change. Contemporary social movements are usually defined outside the domain of conventional political activities like lobbying or working for a political party (Zirakzadeh, 2006: 4-5; Stahler-Sholk, 2007: 49-50). Rather than seeking shelter in conventional politics, the new social movements attempt to find new ways of political expression in their intention to build an alternative social order. Although some of the activists who formed the recent social movements also established a political party, as it was one of the consequences of political mobilisation in Greece (the Syriza), Spain (the Podemos), and Turkey (the HDP) in the 2010s, the conventional activities such as forming a political party still do not constitute the most important features of this new activism. Even when it constitutes the characteristics of new activism, the operation, ideals and structure of these political parties challenge the norms of conventional political parties.

The hallmark of the new social movements, which also accounts for their challenge to the mainstream political parties, is that they question the bureaucracy that their own systems create, which would replace the existing social order. In this regard, the actors of social movements not only question and challenge the existing governmentalised inequalities and injustices created by the state or corporations (Foucault, 1991), but also the very inequalities and problems in their own mechanisms. 'Today's transnational activists seek to confront the inequities they find in their own structures and operations' (Smith, 2013: 1). The new social movements can thus be described as potentially more practical, less hierarchic and bureaucratic.

Shepard and Hayduk (2002) describe new activism starting from the 2000s with their strategies of protest, ritual and community building, reflecting a rejection of the monoculture for an alternative, more spontaneous and authentic vision of the world' (Shepard & Hayduk, 2002: 5). New social movements consist of rituals and community building around a particular space, usually through the occupation/appropriation of spaces in order to go beyond the dominant cultural norms and economic conditions in these spaces. There is much research on the social movements concentrating around the concept of space (Lefebvre, 1996, 2003; Marcuse 2009; Harvey, 2012; Brenner, Marcuse & Mayer et al., 2012; Lelandais, 2014). In the majority of existing research, the main discussion revolves around the idea that the political vision of the protestors is reflected on the spaces that they defend/seek their rights on. The search for space implies that if we can claim ownership of our spaces, we can claim ownership of our labour, our culture and lifestyles.

The issue of space unfolded at the core of the agenda of the Occupy movements around the world. Occupy movements used 'spatial strategies of disruption (marching and camping in unpermitted places); articulated the symbolic significance of particular spaces and challenged the privatisation of cities, which was a reinvigoration of the 'right to the city' debates' (Pickerill & Krinsky, 2012: 280). The public use of unpermitted spaces through camping implied an alternative use of spaces which were commonly used as commercial spaces. Rather than the limited use of these spaces and their exclusivity to

certain segments of people, Occupy movements showed that these spaces would be used and owned by all people, which also meant that there would be an alternative use of economic capital rather than a capitalist understanding of the use of capital and resources.

Similar to the anti-globalisation and anti-capitalist movements in the 1990s and 2000s, such as the Seattle demonstrations¹⁴, the Occupy movements in the 2010s aimed at weakening the neo-liberal order through claiming right to power centres of capitalism. The intention of the Occupy activists in New York was to occupy Wall Street, the financial centre of the world, while the ones in London targeted the London Stock Exchange in a similar way, a strategy which had its origins in the anti-globalisation movements before them. 'Towards the end of the 1990s and the 2000s, the use of "anti-globalisation" label became widespread after the Seattle demonstration in 1999' (Graeber, 2002: 63). The anti-globalisation perspective mostly and widely conceptualised the negative costs of economic, social and political integration caused by globalisation. 'The anti-globalisation movements, which were fuelled by a series of demonstrations at the meetings of WTO, the World Economic Forum, the European Union (EU) and the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO), meant the emergence of a more activist literature that was critical of globalisation' (Bisley, 2007: 15-16). The affinity between the anti-globalisation movements and the Occupy movements lies in their challenge to the legitimacy of neo-liberalism. I discuss that the common framework of the anti-globalisation movement and the Occupy movement is their demand for democratisation of institutions, including the state and, in addition, their critique against corporate liberalism.

However, the difference between the anti-globalisation movements and the Occupy movements is that the latter's activism mainly revolves around space. 'Occupy camps reasserted the spatial dimensions of exclusion and inequality by forcing society to recognise that capitalist accumulation happens

¹⁴ The wide-ranging protests in Seattle, against the WTO Ministerial Conference in 1999. It became a landmark in the history of anti-globalisation movement.

in certain places, and that these places can be named, located and objected to, which helps us to identify the geography of capitalism' (Pickerill & Krinsky, 2012: 280-281). The geography of capitalism is also revealed through the events and festivals that brand the global cities. Global cities had not only served as the centre of commerce and tourism but had also been the cultural and creative centres of the world. These events and sectors also created cultural exclusion and inequality but they can also give rise to cultural spaces, which might challenge the logic and operation of global capitalism.

Nonetheless, following Miller and Nicholls (2013), I want to argue that in spite of this attention to the systemic origins of oppressive urban conditions, the "urban" is still conceived as an "end" in these struggles. I therefore conceptualise the right to the spaces as simultaneously a right to human wellbeing, self-agency and autonomy, which will be the focus of discussion in the final chapter.

The Occupy movements has spread across the world after the first two 'occupations' took place in Zuccotti Park in New York in September, 2011 and in the garden of St Paul's Cathedral in London in October, 2011. The use of parks started to become an indispensable part of the new wave of activism with the launching of the Occupy movements. Juris (2012: 274) defines the aims of the occupiers as 'radical transformations in the organisation of society, politics, and the economy, even as they struggle to address internal racial, class, and gender hierarchies inside the camps. Meanwhile, evolving forms of consensus decision-making, self-organisation, and collaborative networking represent ongoing experiments that prefigure alternative models of sociality and popular democracy. Such practices were at the heart of the movements for global justice, but new viral forms of communication are potentially diffusing them into wider social spheres.' The decision-making processes involved their occupation of parks, which created alternative forms of sociality and autonomy. The Gezi uprising was a part of the Occupy movements, especially on the grounds that the original intention of the protestors was to keep a public park from privatisation, the intention of which expanded to the symbols of neo-liberalism, such as the banks and shopping malls. As an example of this, the protestors during the Gezi uprising not only occupied the park but also boycotted the banks, mainstream media outlets and shopping malls at the time of occupation.

Other than being one of the extensions of the Occupy movements, the Gezi uprising bore similarities with the movements constituting the Arab Spring. The Arab Spring started in Tunisia after the self-immolation of Mohammed Bouazizi on December 17, 2011 and it spread to Egypt, Yemen, Syria and Bahrain. 'The demonstrations during the Tunisian Revolution were an expression of citizens' frustration over economic issues like food inflation and high unemployment, as well as a lack of political freedoms like rights to free speech' (Lotan, Graeff, Ananny, Gaffney, Pearce, Boyd, 2011: 1376). Similar to the social movements constituting the Arab Spring, the Gezi uprising was a reaction to the inequalities created by the neo-liberal regime such as the increasing rates of youth unemployment, but they were also responses to the repression of political freedoms, like the governments' increasing pressure on the media and freedom of expression.

The most important aims of the Arab Spring were to weaken the dictatorial regimes in these countries and to fight for human rights and democracy in the face of different versions of political Islam, although there were no homogeneous economic and political conditions and resistances in different countries where the Arab Spring occurred. The shared feature of the different upheavals constituting the Arab Spring is the fact that these upheavals took place in autocratic states that have long rested on patrimonial rule and are characterised by centralised management and semi-formal economic activities (Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, Syria and Yemen) (Salamey, 2015: 113). This means that there are unregulated and unrecorded activities in the economy of these countries in addition to state-mandated economic operations, which entails that there is much corruption in their bureaucracies. 'The sources driving youth discontent in the Middle East range from frustration with economic conditions, to opposition to the political status quo, to a lack of a sense of efficacy in general' (Hoffman & Jamal, 2012, 168). Other than the inefficacy of the economic system, the people responded to the political crisis that originated from under-democratic practices in their everyday lives. In other words, the social mobilisations in the Middle East attempted to overturn a different form of government, one that is, however, widespread in the region: the neo-patrimonial

state led by the so-called 'New Sultans' (Comunello & Anzera, 2012: 454). In this regard, the New Sultans were at the core of the agendas and any decision-making processes within these countries with heterogeneous ethnic and religious communities. The bureaucracy and economies were not only dysfunctional because of the global impact of neo-liberalism but also because of the hegemony of the regimes of the New Sultans in the region. In this regard, the most important shared characteristic of the Arab Spring across different countries was to be anti-government/anti-Sultan.

There is much research that examined the global aspect of and external sources' impact on the Arab Spring. It is critical to understand the timing of these political transformations when the world has reached an unprecedented level of political and cultural globalisation, a factor that has come to challenge nationalist ideologies and corresponding political economies (Salamey, 2015: 113). Similar to the Occupy movements, which fractured the nationalist ideologies and created a global culture, the impact of the Arab Spring went beyond its intended arena of the Arab peninsula. Some of the accounts which sought to look at the global impact of the Arab Spring rendered it as a belated episode of the Cold War (Tudoroiu, 2013), examined the Russian response to it, which was initially positive but became more critical, mainly due to the threat of the spread of Islamist extremism (Dannreuther, 2015), articulated it as a window of opportunity in revitalising Turkey-EU relations (Dinçer & Kutlay, 2013), analysed Israel's role and impact on it, which was based on an avoidance of a regional approach to the upheavals (Magen, 2015), and looked at the EU's answer to and policies on it from being an actor to a spectator (Bauer, 2013; Schumacher, 2011). The above research examines the reception of the Arab Spring outside the Arab peninsula, but they did not take the agency of the people in the uprisings into consideration.

In discussing the Arab Spring's relation to the social movements in Turkey, I do not regard its immediate reception in Turkey as it was not one of the countries that mobilised during the Arab Spring era and its reception at the time would require further research. However, to say that the Gezi uprising was part of the Occupy movements but not the Arab Spring would be simplistic and

Eurocentric. The Gezi uprising stands at the intersection of the Arab Spring and the Occupy movements, as it aims both at the weakening of the further neo-liberalisation of the economy and culture as well as being against the repressive politics within the current rise of political Islam and the 'New Sultan' regime in Turkey. In 2011, Özhan (2011: 55) pointed out that just as Turkey had a role in the transformation of the Arab world, the Arab world will also play a significant role in the formation of the 'New Turkey', since Turkey will remain an actor helping to build a new democratic and prosperous regional order. In opposition to Özhan's argument, I want to suggest that although people on the Arab peninsula and Turkey were not able to create more democratic societies after the popular uprisings, similar to the Occupy movements across Europe and the USA, this does not mean that resistance is not there.

In the early 2010s, there were many small and larger sized social movements in Turkey, especially in Istanbul and Ankara, for example, women's movements, LGBTI and urban social movements and workers resistances, which created a popular uprising in 2013. The Emek movement was one of the urban social movements which started in April 2010 and lasted until January 2015. The inception of this movement began when the project to move the EMT from the historical complex, the Cercle d'Orient, to the upstairs of the soon to be constructed shopping mall was initiated. The last demonstration took place in January, 2015 when it was announced that the project should have been stopped because it was unlawful, and the activists went to the site of the previous EMT to check if this decision had been implemented. During the Emek movement, the aim was to prevent our spaces from serving the corporations' interests in terms of profits and to reappropriate them as our own spaces. Other than the demonstrations outside the EMT during the festival, this movement extended to other times of the year, whenever there was a new development or decision about it. Above all, the EMT turned into a symbol for keeping the spaces as they are and claiming the right to the city, which was not an end in itself, since it also signified human rights and democracy.

The loss of Istanbul's old neighbourhoods from Sulukule to Ayazağa in the 2010s implied that the old parts of Istanbul, which were its symbols for

many years, dissolved and were replaced by skyscrapers, trade centres, shopping malls and five star hotels. In the Islamist neo-liberal perspective of the AKP, if the spaces do not make 'enough' profit, anything could be destroyed. The AKP's attempt was to turn any of the previously state-owned sites, especially the green areas, such as Gezi Park, into the ownership of their own corporations. These battles against the privatisation of public spaces are similar to the 'Save Sefton Park Meadows Campaign' in Liverpool, a campaign which aimed to save the Liverpool meadowland from being converted into luxury homes, a situation which is replicated throughout the UK, for example, within the protests to prevent the fracking of oil and gas in the Forest of Dean, as well as in other places. The people in the positions of power aim to transform these green areas into neo-liberal spaces, wherein the primary aim is to make profits.

The impetus of the Emek movement and the Gezi uprising was a reaction to make the places 'our home' as 'our home' meant a home for all of us, not for privileged Turks or Islamists. As it is evident from the emerging 'park culture' in the Occupy movements, space has an increasingly more important role in the social movements in the 2000s, which is a shift in focus from the anti-globalisation movements of the 1990s. The protests against the demolition of the Emek movie theatre and the participation in the Gezi uprising are central in understanding current urban culture in Istanbul. Generally, the community in question here, who first became part of the Emek movement and later participated in the Gezi uprising, had a critical perspective on the politics of the Turkish strong state tradition, especially the AKP reign, and the neo-liberal order of societies today. With the non-orthodox movements, this community hoped to create a better, a more egalitarian, uprooted, cosmopolitan and just society. In aiming to do this, they did not dwell on an abstract concept of revolution, but wanted to fight for the right to the public and semi-public local spaces. The occupation of parks and other spaces became symbols of achieving more human rights and participatory democracy in society. For instance, a clear anti-capitalist and anti-neoliberal aspect was attached to both the Gezi uprising and the Emek movement, which can be discerned from the activists' boycott of the shopping malls during the Gezi uprising and the

occupation of the semi-public space of the EMT during the course of the Emek movement.

In the existing literature, there are numerous articulations of 'who' was behind the uprising. The initial responses deemed it a predominantly 'new middle class movement' (Arat, 2013; Keyder, 2013), but more extensive research described it as an uprising consisting of a variety of different groups and communities (Kuymulu, 2013; Karakayali & Yaka, 2014; Abbas & Yigit, 2015). As Kuymulu (2013) shows, the specific anxieties caused by the repressive and authoritarian government, 'brought together a whole body of different interest groups, including environmentalists, yuppies, educated youth, LGBTI, anti-capitalist Muslims, the hyper-secular nationalists, Kurds and Alawites. Their singular aim was to show a collective resistance to related concerns' (Kuymulu, 2013). The uprising did not comprise of a homogeneous group or cannot be reduced to the initiative of certain political organisations. Similarly, Abbas & Yigit (2015) also addressed the variety of different groups to protest in the Gezi Park, from Kemalists to the Kurds. While for Kurdish people in the park, it was a matter of protesting the Turkish state, including the AKP, it was a matter of protecting the Atatürk's way for Kemalists. The events created a national swell of sympathy and ownership, even when the abovementioned groups had little prior affiliation in the history of Turkey.

Previous research on the Gezi uprising also focused on the use of humour in the movement; how the Gezi humour inverted the popular culture and put it in an anti-authoritarian format, which defeats brutality (Emre, Çoban & Şener, 2014: 438-440). Humour became a means to challenge the hierarchical and authoritarian organisation of the Turkish state, so disrupting the status quo. The uprising was, in this regard, against the authoritarian culture promoted by the Turkish state, which has been adopted by many Turkish citizens. The activists criticised the authoritarian Turkish state via the humour they used in their graffiti, in the posters people hung on tents at the park, slogans and the overall park culture. Sofos (2014), in parallel fashion, discusses that a substantial dimension of the Gezi protests revolved around the idea of regaining some sort of subjectivity and agency that had been systematically undermined

and frustrated in Turkey. Sofos regards Gezi as a symptom of political crisis in Turkey (Sofos, 2014; 137-138). Several other accounts dealt with the dynamics of the Gezi uprising, such as the LGBTI movements' place in it (Yıldız, 2014) or the 'alternative' economy at Gezi such as 'the disappearance of money, which enabled running daily chores through voluntary labour, deployed not according to the principles of reciprocity as in market economies, but according to a desire for solidarity' (Gambetti, 2014: 96). By creating their own media outlets, constructing their own habitat and economy, activists at the Gezi Park attempted to regain their agency.

Some previous research interprets the Gezi uprising as a social movement that aimed to challenge neo-liberalism by concentrating on its structural correlation of class forces, material objective conditions and concurrent opportunities (Gürcan & Peker, 2015: 8-9). However, rather than the structures that made up the uprising, its relation to the right to the city and the ways in which different groups participated in decision-making and citizenship are the foci of this thesis. Kuymulu's research (2013) was the first to use the concept of right to the city in relation to the Gezi uprising. However, his article was not informed by ethnographic and qualitative research methods. From a similar but an extensive research approach, Karakayali and Yaka (2014) remark that the Gezi 'was not centred around specifically economic demands but rather revolved more around general considerations about who is in control of people's lives, expressed not only in terms of an anti-authoritarian gesture but through a more fundamental opposition to urban restructuring programmes and the commodification of urban space' (Karakayali & Yaka, 2014: 127). The commodification of urban space through urban restructuring programmes evoked the small movements like the Emek movement as well as a much bigger uprising.

In this section, the aim was to discuss the important features of new social movements such as the Occupy Movements and the Arab Spring in comparison to previous social movements such as the anti-globalisation movements in the 1990s. The discussions on the global social movements throw light on the Emek movement and the Gezi uprising as they embrace

practices from the previous social movements. In this thesis, I discuss the Gezi uprising and the Emek movement within their organic relationship to the Occupy movements and the Arab Spring. The fact that their logic relied on an occupation of central spaces and that they both aimed to weaken neo-liberalism makes them akin to the Occupy movements. At the same time, they also aimed to challenge the ideologies of New Sultan and growing authoritarianism via the penetration of Islamist neo-liberalism in Turkey, such as the violation of human rights or the media bans, which makes them closely related to the upheavals that constituted the Arab Spring.

2.5. Conclusion to the Chapter

In this chapter, the aim was to situate the contemporary social, cultural and political dynamics in Turkey on a global spectrum in order to shed light on the following chapters. In doing this, the specific globalisation and neo-liberalism in Turkey with its Islamist concentration, was crucial to address. In Islamist neo-liberalism, the work ethic and the conditions such as high unemployment rates and insecure jobs laid the foundations for the economic system, while the values of Islam have become the foundation of work and urban culture. This picture also informed Istanbul's cityscape as its most radical urban regeneration happened during the rise of political Islam, even when Istanbul's globalisation started in the 1980s. However, this is not to say that macro-transformations from above determine the fate of the eras. From a Foucauldian perspective, I discussed that power always creates resistance. In this framework, I articulated the Gezi uprising's origins and place within global social movements such as the Occupy movements and the Arab Spring without reducing its specificity to any of these movements.

In my fieldwork, I discovered that the use of spaces was central to the small movement of the Emek, which was one of the movements to pave the way to a much larger uprising. Similar to other social movements today, the defence of spaces from neo-liberal ideologies was the driving force of the uprising in Turkey. In this picture, festivals and similar cultural spaces also fed and in turn are fed by social movements. Thus they are increasingly identified

as forms of resistance by the AKP government. In this regard, in our current age, the neo-liberal programming of cities has an impact on the film festivals but this is not to say that it does not vary from city to city as the specific location and character of a festival also influences its atmosphere, content, purpose, and success. The particular characteristics of global cities, such as the specific Islamic globalisation of Istanbul, have an impact on the festivals and the identities of their audiences. In this authoritarian context, I underline the role and importance of cultural spaces, specifically a film festival.

Chapter 3

Audience and Social Movements'

Ethnography in Istanbul

3.1.Introduction

In order to examine film festivals' impact and their position within the wider sociological, political and economic transformations in societies, within this chapter I discuss that audience ethnography would be more suitable than any other qualitative or quantitative method, as we need to understand the identities of the festivals' audiences, their social interaction with each other and their engagement with the festivals' screenings and events within their 'natural' settings. To examine the politicisation of an audience community at a specific time period, I employed audience and social movements' ethnography rather than other qualitative methods because in the absence of any significant element of participant observation of actual behaviour beyond the interview situation, the researchers are left with the stories that respondents choose to tell him/her. These stories are, however, limited to the level of conscious responses (Morley, 2003: 172).

In order to go beyond these conscious responses, ethnography provided me with opportunities to understand what my informants said and did as well as what they did not choose to say and do. I was able to engage with their 'festival talk' and 'festival activities' in addition to their social movement activities, with the help of the use of audience and social movements' ethnography. This research provides new dimensions to audience ethnography, as the film-going, especially in its relationship to cultural representations, social networks, and especially the use of cities and spaces, has the potential to merge with various social movements. In this framework, my ethnographic perspective revolved around the bottom-up perspective of an insider during the festival and the uprising, which will be one of the important discussions of this chapter. The second part of the chapter conceptualises the potential risks of conducting ethnographic research and finally, the last section outlines the phases of my ethnographic research.

3.2.Ethnographic Methods in Audience and Social Movements Research

Ethnography, in terms of data collection, usually involves the researcher's overt or covert participation in people's daily lives for an extended period of time, watching what happens, listening to what is said, and asking questions through informal and formal interviews, and collecting documents and artefacts in order to throw light on the issues that are the emerging focus of inquiry (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1983: 3). Ethnography, which is grounded in anthropology and sociology, is different from other qualitative research methods since it rests on the researcher's participation in the everyday contexts of the participants, rather than studying in settings and conditions which the researcher herself created. 'The ethnographer should study culture from an insider's perspective, an aim that demands committed, long-term immersion into a setting in order to understand how meaning is created' (Schröder et al, 2003: 65). To gain an insider's perspective necessitates hard work, years of immersion and commitment. In ethnographic research, the aim is to capture both the activities and discussions of the participants. Also, listening to what is said is as important as listening to what is *not* said, as the aim in employing ethnographic methods is not only to document the planned speech of the participants but also to capture their spontaneous and unplanned activities, comments, and their moments of silence. In addition, as Morley (1993: 167) points out, ethnographies facilitate going beyond calculable categories of regularities and generalisable patterns in the sense that the use of ethnographic methods reveals the individual and subjective differences between individual participants, even when they belong to the same communities. In this respect, ethnographies document trends and patterns in order to understand the identities and a way of life of a group of people, but they also aim to represent the heterogeneity of voices within the same group.

The central methodological argument advanced by this thesis is that ethnography can deliver empirically grounded knowledge of the doings of

people in festivals and protests (Gillespie, 1995: 54). Other less socially encompassing methods such as focus groups or interviews alone cannot achieve this same knowledge because ethnography gives the researchers more opportunities to experience the everyday activities and engagements of the festival audiences since festivals are social events. Rather than relying only on interviewing, surveys and/or focus groups, the social and political aspects of festival attendance can be captured by employing ethnographic methods, which are in fact a combination of these qualitative methods. Nevertheless, ethnographic methods are more than a combination of other qualitative methods, they are ways of understanding social life in relational and holistic terms, which cannot be grasped through a series of in-depth interviews or brief periods of observation (Gillespie, 1995: 54-55). In my research, I used ethnographic research methods in order to reveal social and political resistance in practices of everyday life, which is represented in the cinematic practices of a particular audience, in order to examine the close relationship between cultural and political spheres in Turkey.

I also utilised ethnographic methods because I sought to record the ordinariness of festival attendance and social movements around it (Sabry, 2005: 10). In my case study, recording ordinariness implied my participation in the everyday practices of this community, for instance, from their first screening in the morning to their demonstration outside the movie theatre that same day. Involvement in the movie theatres, events in the film festival and social movements during and after the film festival cannot be understood 'without detailed knowledge and understanding of audience doings, [and] the practices which construct the experience. Understanding involvement is critical if one is to understand the relationship between audiences and media products and how audiences make sense of the film and the event' (Srinivas, 1998: 325). I examined this audience community's slogans, posters and stickers in order to understand their alternative ways of resistance. In addition, their involvement in the Gezi uprising provided a more fruitful ground to examine their transformation into an activist community. The talks during the queues in front of and inside the movie theatres, the Q&A's, the demonstrations, and screenings constituted the basis of this research. The festival and protest

speeches and discussions portrayed patterns of sociable interaction and provide shared resources for speaking within the social movements.

In the existing literature, ethnographic methods are used in media studies mainly for audience research (Rao, 2007; Gillespie, 1995; Morley, 1993) and production studies (Ganti, 2002; Cottle, 2007). There is much research on, for instance, production in the newspaper newsrooms (Everbach, 2006; Silcock, 2002; Willig, 2012) as well as on the workings of various film industries, such as the dynamics of the Hindi film industry (Ganti, 2012) or on the difficulties of conducting ethnography in Hollywood (Ortner, 2010). In audience research, ethnographic methods are widely used for understanding how audiences make sense of/engage with different media such as TV programmes or video games. As an example of this, Gillespie's research (1995) concentrates on the Punjabi youth culture in London and their reception of British and Indian media. There is much ethnographic research on television audiences, for instance, audiences' engagement with soap operas (Hobson, 1982; La Pastina, 2004), audiences' viewing practices of reality TV (Holmes, 2004), and fan groups' engagement with such TV programmes as *Star Trek* or *Doctor Who* (Tulloch & Jenkins et al, 1995). Furthermore, ethnographic methods are used for research on cinema education, for instance, on the workings of initiatives for children and teenagers (Marx, 2014). There is also growing ethnographic research on the Internet-mediated cultural contexts, which is conducted in order to examine the ways people engage with Internet journalism (Domingo & Patersen, 2011), online sex environments (Ashford, 2009), musical communities on the Internet (Lysloff, 2003), online game communities (Isabella 2007, Morris, 2004) and/or online social networks such as the Romanian diasporic immigrants' engagement with online blogs and Facebook pages (Trandafoiu, 2013).

There is also much ethnographic research on film audiences. Srinivas (1998) used ethnographic research to understand the engagement of communities of particular Hindi films. In employing ethnographic methods, Srinivas examines how the audiences' participatory and interactive viewing of the Hindi films, such as applauding and whistling loudly, initiated their formation of community. Her research reveals the close affinity between media use and

community formation in the exhibition setting, which throws light on my context. Rao (2007) also conducted ethnography in Punjab, India, and her findings show that in the face of growing Western interest in Bollywood, non-elite audiences from rural India found themselves distanced from the images that Indian cinema is constructing. The significance of Rao's research results from an investigation of shared perspectives of audience members at a specific transitional time when Bollywood's global reach was on the rise as it accounts for how reception can change according to the shifting global/local contexts. In her research on the reception of *Twin Bracelets* (Yu-Shan Huang, 1991) in China, Friedman (2006) traces the impact of the film on agency and identification. Friedman used ethnographic methods to understand the media talk and narratives of audiences who are not foreign to the images they see on the screen (Friedman, 2006: 605). In the abovementioned ethnographic research on film audiences, the audiences' engagement with films themselves still constitutes the centre of attention.

There are also audience ethnographies which aim to discover how notions of audiences as niche markets converge with notions of audiences as 'social groups' in a certain spatial context. Smets' (2013) ethnographic research on the diasporic Turkish and Moroccan film audiences' engagement with various films in Antwerp points out the importance of spaces of the film screenings for the audiences. For instance, for the Turkish audiences the screenings symbolised a spatial emancipation in the urban space because a part of the public space of the theatre in Antwerp was appropriated as 'Turkish' (Smets, 2013: 107). For the purposes of this thesis, Smets' research is vital in its emphasis on the importance of the spaces of the screenings for a given audience group, but his research does not reflect the experiences and practices of the individual members of the Moroccan and Turkish communities in question and in a way homogenises their experiences to provide a glimpse from their activities as distinct communities.

In contrast to the ethnographic research on the general film audiences, the ethnographic approach to the reception and/or organisation of festivals is a relatively new research topic. There is some ethnographic research on, for

instance, music festivals, such as Johnston's research (2011), which examines alternative Christian identity construction at the USA's Cornerstone Festival. Other research explores knowledge production in the organisation of festivals such as the Queensland Music Festival (Stadler, Reid & Fullagar, 2013). There is not much ethnographic research, however, on the general film festival audience's experiences and practices of the festivals. The main axis of audience research on film festivals revolves around festival cinephilia (Koehler, 2009; Czach, 2010; Kishore, 2013) but none of the research completed on film festival cinephilia actually engages with the audiences, beyond a discursive level and on a long-term basis. To date, Frohlick (2005), Khorana (2012) and Dickson (2015) conducted research on film festival audiences by actually engaging with attendees' own practices. Dickson's research (2015) at the Glasgow Film Festival employs qualitative methods, particularly focus groups, in order to give audiences a voice and to examine the experiences and pleasures of film festival attendance, particularly revolving around their use of festival places. Her research throws light on a variety of audiences' pleasures attached to seeing a film as part of the film festival and in a diversity of settings such as a cathedral.

Frohlick (2005) also uses film festival ethnography in order to understand female audiences' reactions to and interpretations of predominantly masculine narratives and active male subjects which were highly prevalent at mountain film festivals in Canada. Her research not only shows how women are situated as gendered spectators, but also engages with women's emotions about masculinities, femininities and adventure. The only research (until the end of 2015) that portrays the activism of audiences by employing ethnographic notes is Khorana's research (2012) on the activist reception of *Samson and Delilah* (Cecil B. Demille, 1949) and *The Tall Man* (Pascal Laugier, 2012) at Australia's local film festivals. In highlighting the role of viewing a local film at a packed cinema, Khorana accounted for the specific reception framework in producing activist discourse (Khorana, 2012: 218-219). Khorana's research relied more on her own ethnographic notes during the screenings rather than a deeper analysis of the audience's responses and she interrogated cultural activism in

the discourses of the audiences during the Q&A's but not their actions and/or activities beyond it.

From a similar perspective, this thesis concentrates on an examination of the meanings a film festival community attached to the spaces (movie theatres) and their political activism in a social movement to keep the previous spaces of the IIFF at a particular transitional point in the history of Turkey. However, because my ethnography was based on their political activism related to spaces rather than cultural activism on their reception of a given film or films, I needed to go beyond the analysis of their discourses on the festival and/or the films. Although my informants' festival talks and narratives constituted an important feature of my research, my methodology relied on a combination of audience and social movement ethnographies because of the necessity to examine their political activities beyond the domain of the festival spaces.

In order to achieve this, I employed social movements ethnography in addition to audience ethnography. Contrary to film festival research, ethnographic methods are widely employed in interrogating social movements (Taylor & Whittier, 1992; Escobar, 1998; Cunningham, 1999; Graeber, 2002, Juris, 2008; Plows, 2008). The reason why ethnography facilitates a potentially deeper understanding of social movements is that social movements and social network activities are highly fluid, rapidly shifting phenomena, and as I mentioned before, ethnography can capture significant shifts missed by macro-level analysis (Plows, 2008: 7). Because I did not seek to have a macro-level analysis of global social movements or social movements in Istanbul, the tools of ethnography facilitated a better and deeper interrogation of the actions, narratives and discussions of a demographic community.

Similar to recent media ethnographies, a good deal of current ethnographic research within social movements concentrates on the use of new media by the protestors (Hamdy, 2012; Bonilla, 2015; Gerbaudo, 2012; Juris, 2012). The main curiosity of this research lies in how these new social movements had been possible, how they were organised and spread via the use of social media and internet technologies, for example, Gerbaudo's research (2015) on the

protesters' use of profile pictures during the social movements of 2011; the Indignados protests in Spain and the Occupy Wall Street protests in the US. Gerbaudo gathered interviews with digital activists, as well as field notes from online observations and an archive of selected social media content. Gerbaudo's book (2012) *Tweets and Streets* also dealt with online and offline activism in Spain and Egypt. Rather than examining activism from the 'God's-eye view' offered by quantitative research such as surveys of protesters, he employed an ethnographic approach from the ground-level with the view of the activist who used the tools of social media (Gerbaudo, 2012: 4-5). This thesis also avoids examining the social movements in question from the 'God's-eye view', as 'the ground level' provides ethnographic research with an opportunity to go beyond over-generalisations about social phenomena.

Whilst there is growing scholarly interest in the use of online ethnographies on social movements and research that employs a combination of online and offline ethnographies, there are also plenty of recent ethnographies of social movements and resistances, relying on face-to-face interaction and socialisation (Abufarha, 2009; Barassi, 2013). In his ethnographic work on the Palestinian resistance in Jenin, where he was born and went to high school, Abufarha (2009:16-21) listened to ordinary people's reactions, reading commentaries, poetry and obituaries on the media, examined posters, videos, booklets and statements, interviewed some protesters, family members and artists, in order to see how people encounter Israel in their daily lives. His research not only contributed to an understanding of the portrayal of state violence in the Middle East but also how people resist in their everyday lives. Also, the examination of posters, slogans and poetries of the resistance was an important feature of Abufarha's ethnography, as in ethnographies, capturing the daily life of participants and movements could only be possible with a close interrogation of different materials that constitute the field.

In the existing scholarship on social movements, there is also a growing tradition of activist ethnographies (Graeber, 2002, 2009; Hale, 2006; Juris, 2007, 2008; Petray, 2012). To illustrate, in her engagement with Aboriginal activism, Petray (2012: 551-557) used ethnographic methods to research the

political emotions of protesters and contended that the ethnographic approach of sharing political emotions with research participants brings the researchers further into the milieu of the research setting. Petray's activist ethnography relied not only on her mutual emotions with her participants during the protests but also on the awareness that activist researchers must remain reflexive and critical of those emotions.

Similarly, in his 'militant ethnography', Juris (2008) discusses that 'the researcher has to build long-term relationships of commitment and trust, become entangled with complex relations of power, and live the emotions associated with direct-action organising a social movement and transnational networking' (Juris, 2008: 20). Much of the 'activist' or 'militant' research on and with social movements highlighted the importance of the long-term relationships within the field and the sharing of emotions with the activists. Juris (2008) also defined the ethnographer's body as a tool of research (Juris, 2008: 64). My research, however, diverts from Juris' militant ethnography (2007, 2008) in the sense that Juris puts much emphasis on the ethnographer's position as the organiser of events and demonstrations, facilitator of meetings, panels and risking his/her life. Although I did some of these (like risking my body on the barricades), I was more of a regular participant/audience member/activist in the events. For instance, I never organised an event or demonstration myself. Rather than acting as an organiser, I was a researcher, a regular protester and a witness to events.

That is to say, the witnessing of transformative events changed the ways in which I conducted this research and the ways in which my informants participated in my research. For Peters (2001: 707), 'to witness an event is to be responsible in some way for it. Witnessing raises questions of truth and experience, presence and absence, death and pain, seeing and saying, and the trustworthiness of perception'. The ethnographic approach of this research relied on the witnessing of the social events in the film festival and the uprising. It was facilitated via my active participation in demonstrations, workshops, panels and park forums during the Gezi uprising, with a combination of participant observation and go-alongs with my informants. Hale (2006: 97)

describes activist ethnography as ‘a method through which we affirm a political alignment with an organized group of people in struggle and allow dialogue with them to shape each phase of the process, from conception of the research topic to data collection to verification and dissemination of the results’. In Hale’s perspective, other than a committed and long-term relationship with the participants, not only during the phase of the data collection but also in its conceptualisation, researchers have a responsibility to the political organisations as well as academia. This responsibility lies in the underlying intention to create social change. Previous research on social movements also ‘used ethnographic methods in order to organise social change and use it as a means for simultaneously studying and supporting projects for progressive social change’ (Urla & Helepololei, 2014: 438). The value of the use of ethnographic methods in social movements lies in their potential to create social change as well as a leap of consciousness for the researchers, the participants and the society at large.

Activist ethnographies not only provide knowledge of the people’s resistances against human rights abuses, social and economic inequalities, state violence and/or authoritarianism, but they also raise issues on the problems in the organisation and evolution of social movements themselves, which is as crucial as the former. In their ethnographic research on the Israeli Arab Spring, Monterescu and Shaindlinger (2013: 230) interrogated the emergence of a political subjectivity and its embedded urbanity as part of the making of the new public sphere, but also accounted for the limits of mobilisation, such that it created radicalisation without any revolutionary results. Activist ethnographies of social movements, in this respect, examine the shortcomings of their own mobilisation, power relations in their structures and/or their limitations in addition to their contribution to social movement theories or deeper knowledge about particular social movements. In this respect, ethnographic methods also helped me to gather both the intentional and unintentional features of the mediation of the events and films at the festival and social movements themselves. As an example of this, although this community fought for a more just, freer and more cosmopolitan future in Turkey, my ethnographic data revealed that they also had conservative underlying

motivations and dispositions, which marked the 'unintentional' findings as a result of the use of ethnographic methods in researching social movements. In other words, activist ethnographies can also reveal content that could point out the flaws in social movements, which would not only benefit critical scholarship on social movements but also the social movements themselves.

In concluding this section, the in-depth interviews and the participant observation during the festival of 2013 fell short in understanding the activist tendencies of this audience community, therefore I decided to prolong my ethnography, which included participant observations, go-alongs and in-depth interviews during the Gezi uprising. These methods gave me insights into the transformation of the identities of a community but also as individuals. Gillespie's work (1995: 59) on TV audiences shows that ethnographies document people's everyday interactions as well as their personal biographies and family history with shared TV experiences. In my case study, employing ethnographic methods not only helped me to engage with my informants' everyday interactions, but also grasp their personal histories and political identities, as festivals are events where people socialise as well as watching films. Ethnography was a unique method to document this community's shared memory of their participation in the festival and the attendance of the Emek movie theatre, which triggered their social movements. My ethnographic strategy therefore relied on an activist strategy, which meant I was not only a witness but also shared political emotions with my informants. On the one hand, my aim in employing ethnographic research was to contribute to the study of festivals, a current social and cultural phenomenon that has been largely ignored by Turkish cultural and media studies. On the other hand, the use of this research approach resulted from my intention to lead to a wider academic discussion on resistance and social movements, especially in Turkey and the Middle East.

3.3.The Risks and Shortcomings of Ethnographic Research

The combination of scholarship and activism has been subject to diverse criticism while the roles of researchers as witnesses and participants of direct political struggle have also been problematised. Edelman (2001: 310) suggests that becoming involved in the social movements would create biased results and ethnographies of social movements necessarily result in over-identification with these movements. Although over-identification is a risk in different ethnographic research, especially in activist research, I discuss that identification with the social movements at the moment of immersion and gathering data, but distance at the time of writing, can lead to hands-on, practical and thorough understanding of social movements as well as providing creative insights for scholarship. Without focusing on activist research, Ang (1989) discusses that research, particularly audience research, always interprets and constructs reality from a particular position and point of view. Ang also contends that it would be misleading to assume that a correct scientific perspective will finally allow us to achieve the utopian dream of a world completely known in the form of indisputable facts (Morley, 1993: 169). It is important to always question the epistemological validity of scientific facts received from ethnographic research as well as facts gained from seemingly more 'objective' and non-biased research methods such as quantitative methods or surveys. Even quantitative methods are imbued with the knowledge claims of the researcher in terms of the design of the research questions and the analysis of the responses (Plows, 2008: 8). In this regard, the issue of 'objectivity' should be a concern not only for ethnographic research but also for other qualitative as well as quantitative research, as research is always shaped, facilitated and conceptualised by a human being.

Reflexivity and subjectivity are also two other important characteristics of ethnographies in order to understand their nature, contribution to knowledge and also shortcomings. 'Ethnographic research is an obviously reflexive endeavour, which is simply a process of self-reference that refers to the ways in which the products of research are affected by the process and personnel doing

the research' (Davies, 2008: 4). Following Davies (2008), ethnographic research can be described as a transformative process for both the researcher and the researched. The researcher and the researched, in this framework, are aware of the fact that they are making meaning in ethnographic research. In other words, 'we become interested primarily in how we "do" knowledge in writing, the details of which are intimately connected to our psyches and subjectivities in the worlds we "doers" inhabit. Reflexivity thus becomes a requirement for how to see and write ethnography' (Schneider, 2002: 461-462). However, self-referencing i.e. taking your own position as a reference point, might lead to problems in our exposition and analysis of truth. The use of our own experiences and actions in our research reports, theses or papers is commonly referred to as unscientific or, to say the least, problematic. 'Ethically, reflexivity complicates our positionality but also strengthens our understanding of our subjectivity and involvement in knowledge production' (Gillan & Pickerill, 2012: 139). However, our subjectivities in fact become part of the research design and the production of knowledge not only in qualitative research but also in quantitative research, as human beings are situated in social and spatio-temporal networks of making meaning.

In this regard, our identities (as researchers, activists, women, white, homosexuals etc.) and activities overlap and intertwine with our research. The traditional research in humanities and the social sciences refuses to interrogate how we as researchers create our texts and presume that this research should neutralise personal and political influence. Nonetheless, following feminist (Abu-Lughod, 1990; Fine, 1994; Skeggs, 1994; Davis, 2013) and activist approaches (Juris, 2008; Hale, 2006; Urla & Helepololei, 2014) in ethnographic research, I agree that 'we are human inventors of some questions, shapers of the contexts we study, co-participants in our interviews, interpreters of others' stories, narrators of our own' (Fine, 1994: 14).

In this thesis, I preferred to be an insider and an activist, which informed my methodology, theoretical approach and findings. 'Being an insider is not a prerequisite of good ethnographic practice; it is simply an approach' (Plows, 2008: 12). My political positioning implied that I participated in the

demonstrations, chanted slogans against the current government, attended forums, meetings of the neighbourhood organisations or workshops and that my participation meant that I was working for social and political change. However, all of this is not to say that the role of the researcher should be over-emphasised. It is not an individual endeavour to research in an activist context such as a social movement or an uprising; it is rather a collective endeavour where there are different roles of different individuals depending on their backgrounds, abilities and/or qualifications, which are also subject to change over time. More importantly, engaged reflexive practice, which implies engaging in campaigning with specific non-governmental organisations and other groups and taking sides in specific contexts, has meant that I was able to provide a picture of an emergent and complex reality as it occurred in real time and to theorise network activity from the lens of my informants' experiences and my field notes about the happenings.

In this respect, I did not intend to present an 'objective' articulation of the social movements in Istanbul in 2013 and 2014 but a subjective portrayal of them through the lens and experiences of a demographic group of audiences/activists. The underlying leitmotif of this perspective is that, following Hall (1996), our identities, which are the sources of our stories, are dynamic and fluid and thus often co-evolve with our research. Hall (1996: 4) contended that identities are never unified and increasingly fragmented and fractured; identities are about questions of using the resources of history, language and culture in the process of becoming rather than being. With my fieldwork, I captured glimpses of the 'becoming' of the identity of my individual informants, their identity as a community, as well as my own identity. As an example of this, during the course of my research, our perception of activism changed as well as our understanding of being a cinephile. However, this transition was not the same for all the members of this community.

Some other scholarly studies on activist research methods differentiated front-line or direct action from back office activism for political organizations or causes. For Smeltzer (2012: 263), front-line activism was not appropriate or safe for researchers and research participants, especially in democratically

restricted environments. Instead, Smeltzer (2012) highlighted the benefits of the back office labour and suggested students and researchers undertake back office research strategies. Although safety was quite a concern for my research, especially when Turkey was becoming more democratically restricted, back office support would not have facilitated a deeper understanding of the increasing politicisation of a community. I would have used back office activism for understanding some aspects of the organisation of the social movements in question but it could not have been useful for a grasp of the shifting identities of participants at the time of social movements.

Having said this, conducting fieldwork in Istanbul in 2013 and 2014 was not safe and it was risky. 2013 was safer, especially at the beginning of the festival, but after direct exposition to state violence beginning from the 7th of April, 2013, my methodology, as well as concern for safety, transformed. People in Istanbul increasingly faced police brutality in their everyday lives, so that their understanding of risk and danger also changed over time. For instance, Berkin Elvan, a fourteen-year-old child, died in March 2014, because he was shot by a tear gas canister during the uprising, when he was going to buy bread from the market in Okmeydanı, which is close to Beyoğlu. Accordingly, a person's life was under threat if that person lived in the central or touristic parts of the city in Istanbul. In this framework, the interior spaces were more protected than the exteriors. Especially during the Gezi uprising, meeting my informants in cafes and restaurants in Beyoğlu was much safer than meeting them in other places.

For this reason, the number of interviews increased during the uprising, due to my intention and concern for the safety of my informants and me. I always made sure that my informants and I were in the safest places around Beyoğlu and throughout my research, that there was no harm to us because 'as the researcher it was my responsibility to work for minimising my own or others' exposure to violence' (Peritore, 1990: 359). In addition to interiors, public spaces were more protected than outside your apartment's door or places where you were alone because there were thousands of people in public spaces, which reduced the risk of direct exposure to violence. Additionally, my

informants were activists and cinephiles, which meant that they were already out of their houses during the IIFF and the uprising, so that my research did not pose extra risks to their lives. In other words, my informants and I were already there in these social movements, so my research was not the reason that put my participants into a potentially dangerous environment.

In this section, I have described the potential shortcomings of ethnographic research and the ways in which I attempted to deal with them throughout the course of conducting this research. I discussed the problems of conducting research in Turkey at a time when state violence reached its peak. In order to prevent potentially dangerous situations, some previous research suggested back office activism (Smeltzer, 2012: 263), rather than front-line activism. However, I suggested that back office activism would not be useful and sufficient for a grasp of the shifting identities of participants at the time of social movements. The important discussions of this section also revolved around the fact that conducting research on social movements would create biased results, mainly due to potential over-identification with social movements. Within this background, I intended to show that our subjectivities and ideological baggage in fact become part of the research design and the production of knowledge, not only in research on the social movements, but also in other qualitative and quantitative research.

3.4.The Phases of Fieldwork

3.4.1.Groundwork

In the first phase of my research, my curiosities revolved around the impact of the loss of large format movie theatres on the film festival audiences. My previous experience as a member of the film festival circuit in Istanbul and more recent experience of social movements deepened my scholarly interest in the larger sociological and cultural transformations/issues related to audiences' identities. From 2002 onwards, I not only followed the IIFF regularly but I also

worked for the festivals of the IKSŞ, first as a volunteer and later as an artist guide (2005-2007). From my early immersion in the IİFF, I had many pages of early field notes taken from master-classes, Q&A's, press conferences and screenings, which helped me to determine my research questions and enabled the formation of my route before the actual fieldwork. I also worked for a film magazine in Turkey, called *Yeni Film*, for more than nine years (I have had a press card for five years), which facilitated my free participation in films and other events as part of the film festival. When participation was free, I had more chance to attend and observe the festival networks. These opportunities gave me a chance to establish my own professional network within the festival and press circuits and after years of immersion, I was also able to build trust within this community.

I also participated in the Emek movement from 2010 onwards until I moved to the UK in September, 2012. My political engagement as an activist and witness against the radical urban renewal programmes in particular and the AKP's neo-liberal and Islamist ideology in general, shaped the ways in which I immersed within the field. In this regard, I was not a neutral third party to the transformations as my groundwork and data collection were enhanced by my own experience of these transformations. My decision to conduct ethnographic research in the face of a repressive political period of Islamist neo-liberal globalisation in Turkey was propelled and shaped by a commitment to working towards social justice and participative democracy, which were the most important underlying themes of the recent festival culture at the IİFF and the park culture during the Gezi uprising.

3.4.2.Focusing and Immersion

My ethnographic research commenced as audience ethnography in March, 2013 but during the course of my informants' participation and/or organisation of the Gezi uprising, it became an audience and social movement ethnography of a film festival community. This transformation in my methodology implied a passage from an ethnographic research approach with an activist audience

community in the context of a festival to an ethnographic research approach with an audience community which took direct political action. My film festival ethnography inevitably extended to Gezi Park. After Gezi Park was occupied by the police forces, the movement extended to other parks such as the Abbasağa and Yoğurtçu Parks, and so did my research. In this regard, the transitional atmosphere of social and political life did not only change the festival attendance of my participants, but it also transformed my methodology. During the uprising, I participated in the daily life practices of my informants, which gave me an opportunity to observe their identities more, as the festival is limited by its own spaces like movie theatres, conference rooms or concert venues and it takes place for two weeks. I thus conducted an audience and social movements ethnography from March, 2013 to April, 2014, by including 62 in-depth interviews, participant observation and go-alongs during the IIFF and the Gezi uprising.

I conducted interviews that were of varying lengths with the IIFF audience, including the workers of the IIFF, the two curators of the IIFF, a translator and a member of the FIPRESCI jury. In addition to voices from inside the IKSŞ, I interviewed one of the people who organised the demonstrations against the demolition of the EMT. By interviewing the workers of the IKSŞ and the people who organised the demonstrations, I benefited from different perspectives and voices, which enabled heterogeneity of representations in my research. During my first year in the field in 2013, I tended to conduct more structured interviews, because I was less experienced in the field as a researcher. In the second year of my fieldwork, in 2014, most of my interviews were semi-structured, which left more room for extra comments of my informants, giving them more freedom in what to expand upon. Each interview, during which I took notes and recorded the voices of my informants, lasted around one hour. The general tendency was to interview individuals separately but I interviewed three couples in pairs, which was also an effective method. By doing this, I was able to shadow these individuals' practices in their immediate social environment in addition to observing their actions alone and with a lot of other people in screenings and demonstrations.

In April, 2013, during the 32nd IIFF, I conducted twenty in-depth interviews. I interviewed another thirteen people during the Gezi uprising in various parks and cafes in the summer of 2013, in addition to shadowing my previous informants from the film festival. In April, 2014, during the 33rd IIFF, I interviewed 41 people in total. I was able to interview twelve of my previous informants and participated in their everyday uses of the film festival. In April, 2014, I interviewed twenty-nine new informants, in order to gain a perspective of the changing demographic/audience, as it is quite a dynamic film festival scene in Istanbul.

In addition to interviewing, my research also relied heavily on participant observation with the same informants, which involved an attempt at understanding and interpreting the meanings and experiences of a group (Burgess, 1984; Silverman, 2006). Even when direct interviewing constituted an important aspect of my research, 'long-term observation enabled a better grasp of the practices of this community as these are only gleaned through long-term participant observation and by treating fieldwork as a long conversation, rather than simply through direct interviewing' (O'Reilly, 2009: 19). Watching films and participating in the events together, going to their favourite coffee shops or workplaces and shadowing them in the Emek movement and/or the Gezi uprising gave me a chance to expand more on not only their festival-going habits, but also their identities and political activism, which paved the way for a more participatory research strategy and allowed more room for spontaneity and freedom.

In participant observation, 'the researcher has to react to and interact with others in the events and situations that spontaneously unfold before her during the course of the participant observation. The researchers also bring in their own unique backgrounds and experiences to the field, whilst doing participant observation' (DeWalt & DeWalt, 2011: 34). The spontaneity of participant observation enabled my research to be more flexible and dynamic, which was due to becoming a more experienced researcher, as compared to 2013. During the festival's time period, this research relied on participant observation, but at the time of the uprising I tended to employ go-alongs, which

can be described as the more general practice of ‘hanging out’ with informants while they engaged in natural activities. Such an informal form of ethnography would still provide advantages over off-location interviews or unattached observations (Kusenbach, 2003: 477-478). I thus benefitted from both participant observation and go-alongs, which is simply a less formal version of participant observation.

In my fieldwork, I made use of the public and semi-public spaces of the streets, cafes, parks, metros, shopping malls and movie theatres around Beyoğlu and Kadıköy; the two centres of Istanbul in the so-called Asian and European sides of the city. Following Frohlick’s ethnographic research on the mountain film festivals in Canada, I want to argue that film festivals are not bounded locales but spaces that ‘spill over’; therefore I conducted my research within these diffuse and overlapping spaces (Frohlick, 2005: 177). ‘Film festivals as spaces that spill over’ indicates that the IIFF makes use of a variety of different neighborhoods and buildings that are spread across the city. As an addition to Frohlick’s ethnographic research in the mountain film festivals’ own places as well as places like cafes and bars, my contribution to the sites of festival ethnographies was the sites of protest, which overlapped with the festival’s own places. The festival spaces spilled over to sites of protest, due to the engagement of its audiences with social movements.

By working at different sites, I was able to benefit from the different dynamics of public and semi-public spaces, which broadened my horizon of how people related to spaces. In 2013, I usually met my informants in cafes, bistro bars and their workplaces. I created a link through communal eating and drinking, which is one of the most important ways of building trust. There is some research on the relationship between community building and food consumption, such as Kofod’s article (2012) on how meals are used to build community among the institutionalised elderly in Denmark. In the context of this research, communal eating and drinking worked not only as an icebreaker during the course of my fieldwork, but also as a means through consolidating my relationship with my informants and building community. A lot of this was built around drinking tea and coffee. In general, I offered my informants a cup of

coffee and/or tea, most of the time they accepted my offer, which confirmed the cultural norms and, in a way, normalised our relationships. In addition to the festival's own time period in 2013 and 2014, drinking tea (more than coffee) was a common habit of the occupiers of Gezi Park and drinking tea together or offering tea was one of the most important features of the culture of sharing.

With a selection of my informants, I attended films or met up with them during the course of screenings and other events. Especially in 2014, I was able to shadow them during and after the screenings, sometimes meet them in the foyers of the movie theatres, right after or before panels, master-classes and films. I also participated in planned and spontaneous activities in Gezi Park and other parks, which inverted the planned 'limitedness' of my fieldwork site. When I shadowed my informants at the film screenings or events that they were participating in, however, I observed and participated in these public events to take my personal notes after these events, without recording or taking photos, as I am well aware that 'researchers making audio or video recordings should obtain appropriate copyright clearances, as festivals and film screenings are public events' (British Sociological Association, Statement of Ethical Practice, 2002: 3). For those observed actions, which took place in movie theatres and in other public settings such as master-classes in conference rooms or forums in the parks, I collected my data via observation and interaction with other people, without gaining informed consent. That is because, 'if the observed action takes place in a truly public setting such as a park or a political rally, there is generally no expectation that what is said and done there, at least in terms of the primary action, will be private. The researcher is generally free to collect data, both via observation and interaction with the other participants, without gaining individual informed consent' (ASA Ethical Guidelines, 2011: 5).

During the course of my fieldwork, after obtaining their consent, I recorded the interviews of my informants, with the help of a recorder and my phone. I am also well aware that 'it is not permissible to audio or video record any activity or conversation where there is a reasonable expectation of privacy without the consent of the participants' (ASA Ethical Guidelines, 2011: 5). I did not record any of these activities or my interaction with the people who were not

aware of the fact that I was doing fieldwork. Rather, I took notes after these events, in order to remind myself of what happened there and to conceptualise them later on. I also preferred not to take photos in order to preserve the confidentiality and privacy of my informants, but took notes and studied the materials provided.

I conducted overt research throughout my fieldwork at the IIFF, which means being open about the research: ‘openly explaining the research to the informants, its purpose, who it is for and what will happen to the findings’ (O’Reilly, 2009: 9). While my position was overt during my interviews and participant observation in 2013 and 2014, it was less straightforward during my participant observation in the context of the Gezi uprising. The near impossibility of disclosing my identity as a researcher to all people meant that my position was covert to the people watching the films or participating in the events and protests, except for my informants. Thus, although I did not conceal the fact that I was researching the event and had been open with network members in the past, ‘the sheer scale of the event meant that there was an inevitable degree of covertness’ (Uldam & McCurdy, 2013: 49-50).

3.4.3. The Researcher and Her Informants

As some of my informants were familiar with me from previous years’ festivals or knew me because of being members of the same social groups and networks, we eliminated a considerable amount of the power inequity that might arise between the researcher and the informants. I had also been an activist for more than seven years, working against various social injustices, and participated in the Emek movement and the uprising. I believe that long-term investment in the fieldwork decreased the risk of power inequities between the ethnographer and the informants. In my research, the informant/researcher relationships were enhanced by the shared experience of the abovementioned transformations (Calvey, 2000: 43) and shared emotions (Petray, 2012; Juris, 2008). The repressive political atmosphere in Istanbul brought individuals and communities closer, which made my access and the maintenance of my relationship with my informants a lot easier. For my informants, it meant an act

of solidarity and sharing to take part in my research because they considered it as part of the activism and belonging to this community. The drawback of this solidarity was the distance I needed for writing my thesis, but I benefitted from living in the UK after the mobilisation for the Emek movement and the uprising ended, which meant that I inhabited another space and culture.

Because the great majority of ethnographic research depends upon the successful negotiation and maintenance of access, having access to relevant informants was very important for the process of my research. Access means that 'social actors grant the researcher access to their everyday lives: they grant license to witness, participate in and converse about issues that might otherwise reach a more restricted social circle' (Atkinson, 2009: 19). Thus the term 'access' means far more than simply physical access to a given research site. After I started sending out emails and contacting people via social media in March, 2013, I scheduled my meetings with people and organised my attendance to events. In the case of the IIFF, as it is organised by the IKSIV, it includes networks of professionals, workers and audiences. I had to have access to the audience of the IIFF in addition to the people who work for its organisation. Thanks to the help and support of my colleagues and friends, I was directed to many people coming from different ethnic backgrounds, class affiliations, age groups or work experiences.

I was able to reach my informants easily because they all had emails and social media profiles, but for different reasons I was not able to meet all of my previous informants in 2014 as my informants were a dynamic/mobile group. Sending out emails and/or Facebook messages were the initial most important methods that I used in order to reach my informants. In 2013, I reached most of my informants through emails which I sent them before going to the field from the UK. In 2013, except for one interview, I conducted all my interviews and meetings by scheduling them prior to the meeting by using emails or Facebook messages. Similarly, before I went to the field in April 2014, the last two weeks of March were marked by an exchange of emails with my informants from the previous year, in addition to the new informants that I was going to meet.

The informants of my film festival ethnography were cinephile activists who had a great interest in cinema, frequently went to movie theatres and, most importantly, attended film festivals. All of my informants worked, studied and/or lived in the very centre of Istanbul and they frequently went to movie theatres in this area. A fair portion of my informants worked within universities or higher education institutions. Another fair portion of them worked freelance; as editors, scriptwriters and/or within the film and media industries, which implied 'precarious' working and living conditions, especially where Turkey is considered. Other informants worked in plazas as higher ranked professionals and some of them were lawyers, engineers and high-ranking civil servants. I also had some retired informants and other informants were students who were doing photography, art, cultural and film studies.

My informants came from different ethnic, socioeconomic classes or cultural backgrounds, but sharing a cinematic and political experience made them similar. The similarity here lies in their current perspectives and resistance, despite their different backgrounds. Most of my informants were committed to leftist politics, which implied that they were openly condemning abusive cultural and political policies and practices while advocating for local/global economic, social and cultural justice. Most of my informants were a displaced group; they were increasingly exposed to psychological and even physical violence and discrimination by the current Islamist and neo-liberal government and the overall authoritarian state tradition in Turkey.

This audience community was already political and active before the uprising, but during the course of the uprising they started to engage with politics even more radically. Radicalisation here implies that my informants started to take political action and to define themselves as 'activists'. As a result of their direct political activism, the ways in which they chose their films or the ways in which they valued and used the IIFF also changed. I experienced this at the festival of 2014, after the uprising, to the fullest extent. In 2014, their understanding of and empathy about the past forms of state violence in Turkey also expanded. Although all my informants agreed on the fact that they were against the demolition of the EMT and other injustices due to the strong state

tradition in Turkey and its culmination within the AKP's reign, the ways they were proposing solutions, the ways they related to the past, the IKSŞ as an institution and the social movement and the uprising were different.

3.4.4. Writing

Unlike most ethnographic fieldwork, which is based on an engagement with an unfamiliar place and/or setting, prior involvement helped me to have easier access to my informants and networks of the festival and social movements. However, the problem with my research was 'making the familiar strange again' (Gillespie, 1995: 67). In order to make myself a bit of a stranger, my field notes gave me a chance to observe what happened from a distance. 'The ability to step back is what makes a successful activist researcher – immersing oneself in a social setting so much that we share political emotions with our research participants, but then moving back out to a distant position from which we can look at things from another perspective' (Petray, 2012: 561). More important than my field notes, the fact that I lived in the UK for three years gave me a chance to gain a distance from my own culture and to step back, which allowed me to create the necessary distance in relation to the field. During the fieldwork, 'we participate and observe, we note conversations we have both engaged in and overheard; we record activities, events, and stories; we collect news articles or anything of interest that tells us more about our topic; and we conduct interviews for subsequent transcription. This is done reflexively, with a research puzzle guiding us, and with constant reflection on what we are seeing and hearing' (O'Reilly, 2009: 14). In this regard, in addition to the self-reflexivity of me in the field as an audience member and activist, my reflection upon the data was also self-reflexive, a process which occurred mostly in the UK, when I had achieved a distance from my field.

I recorded, transcribed, and analysed the interviews and also translated the quotations cited. For the sake of anonymity, the quotations are linked to respondents' affiliations and not their names. All the original data is in Turkish, I translated them to English. The transcription process is also an important

process, most of which is not described or even mentioned in qualitative research. Transcription was the most time-consuming and longest part of my research after the fieldworks of 2013 and 2014. After I transcribed all the interviews, the Q&A's and related panels in 2014, I started to think about the ways of producing knowledge. I then interpreted emerging categories to guide subsequent observations from my data.

In the writing period, 'the researcher identifies structured routines and relationships in the hope of identifying a framework that might be relevant to understanding similar settings or which, in some cases, may be broadly generalisable' (O'Reilly, 2009: 16-17). In order to identify the framework and emerging themes in my research, I determined the concepts that were of importance for my research. Most important concepts that I highlighted in the interviews were related to the Emek movement and uprising. I used different colours for different concepts on the document on which I transcribed the data. My account of my informants' participation in screenings, events and protest experiences and post-participation narratives is by its nature partial. I have selected interviews and exchanges that underscore the tensions and contradictions of interest to me and I also asked questions that served the theoretical purposes in mind. This means that I singled out and translated specific participants' narratives.

To do ethnographic work consists of doing two types of writing. 'One kind is done 'in the field'. These field-notes are close to experience, textually fragmentary, consisting of detailed 'raw' documentation of interviews and observations as well as spontaneous subjective reactions. The other sort, completed at home, is reflective, polished, theoretical and inter-textual. The former is done in isolation, sometimes on primitive equipment, in difficult conditions, with people talking; writing at home is done in academy, in libraries or in studies' (Gupta & Ferguson, 1997: 12). I took my field-notes when I was in Istanbul but wrote the majority of my notes after the two consecutive IIFs. From 2013, I do not have many pages of field notes, as my fieldwork in Istanbul was full of rushing around and trying to meet people in the midst of growing chaos. I also could not take many notes during the Gezi uprising, as it required

a constant psychological and physical investment and necessitated a constant sense of 'being there'. In 2013, I mostly took my notes, which can be considered more as reflective and polished, after the Gezi uprising was over in August, 2013.

While I was writing my research, I decided to use pseudonyms for my informants in order to increase their safety. As this research aimed to capture the politicisation of a community at a time when democracy was increasingly restricted, they might well be in danger as a result of what they said and did during the process of my fieldwork. 'The informant may share information that could jeopardise his or her position in a system. This information must remain anonymous and protected from those whose interests conflict with those of the interviewee' (Dicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006: 319). I kept the personal information of my informants anonymous because their political position can conflict with and challenge the interests of the current government. As a researcher it was my duty to make sure that their names were not disclosed even if I used their true affiliations and ages, with the exception of the two coordinators of the IIFF in 2013 and 2014, Azize Tan and Kerem Ayan. As their names could be found online or by other means, concealing their names would have been redundant.

3.5.Conclusion to the Chapter

Rather than a structural or God's-eye view research strategy, the use of ethnography enabled me to capture the ordinariness of my informants' practices in their natural settings. I conducted audience ethnography in order to examine the changing practices and identities of an audience community at a radically changing time period, particularly revolving around their engagement with the spaces of the festival during the IIFF. However, audience ethnography fell short of meeting my intentions, as my informants' small social movement during the festival and much larger uprising had become the focus of my fieldwork since this research relied on an examination of the politicisation of this audience community within and outside the time of the IIFF. This chapter shows that by using audience and also social movements' ethnography, I was able to capture

my respondents' festival talk and activities in addition to their practices in their social movements. It shows that ethnographic research was informed by my intention to incorporate theory and concrete political practice. Therefore my research strategy involved an activist research strategy and I was an insider in the setting of my fieldwork, which implied that I was not a stranger to the historical, social and cultural context, spoke the same language as the respondents and have been a part of the same audience and activist community. This chapter also illustrates that I was not only a researcher, but also an activist who protested against the current government and its urban politics along with my informants.

Additionally, this chapter scrutinizes that embracing an activist ethnographic approach created strengths as well as drawbacks for my fieldwork. The advantages of employing a politically engaged ethnography from an insider's perspective were a deeper and bottom-up grasp of audience actions. Furthermore, as I was familiar to the setting in question, it created an easier access and immersion. The shortcomings of employing an activist ethnography, as I pointed out in this chapter, were over-identification and objectivity. In this chapter, I have also discussed that objectivity should always be a concern not only for ethnographic research, but, further, for all research, including quantitative research. In order to deal with the problem of over-identification, I had to become a stranger to my field in the process of writing in the UK, which was difficult because of my exposure to social media and other media outlets. However, I felt alien to both settings because of my participation in two cultures in Turkey and England at the same time, which did not permit me to 'feel at home' in the field and outside of it (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1995: 115). The fact that I did not feel at home enabled creative insights in my understanding of a community which did itself not feel at home, although 'not feeling at home' bore different meanings for my informants and me. The fact that I resided in both the UK and Turkey, and identified with both cultures, decreased the risk of over-identification with the political activism of this audience community.

Chapter 4

The IIFF Culture in the Context of Cinema in Turkey and Film Festival Research

4.1.Introduction

This chapter throws light on the history of movie-going and festival attendance in Turkey. It describes various roots and influences of the film production and reception in Turkey, which had reflections on the festival scene and audiences at the IIFF. This section describes the history of cinema in Turkey predominantly from an exhibition and distribution perspective. Following the work of film scholars and historians in Turkey (Erdoğan & Göktürk, 2001; Dönmez-Colin, 2008; Suner 2010; Arslan, 2011), I divide the history of cinema in Turkey into two epochs; the periods before and after 1996. The Yeşilçam film industry, which dissolved in the late 1980s, was the most prominent landmark of the history of cinema in Turkey before 1996, while the current tendency is to describe the new phase as the 'New Turkish Cinema'. In this research, the impact of the Yeşilçam and the new cinema in Turkey are inevitable in terms of the evolution of my informants as cinephiles, pro-Western and cosmopolitan communities, as well as their nostalgic attachment to the movie theatres of the Yeşilçam era, such as the EMT. In this section, important dates and issues in the history of modern Turkey also shed light on the history of cinema as well as later discussions, such as 'secular modernity'.

The second section of this chapter situates the IIFF within the context of local cinema in Turkey as well as global festivals. The main discussion revolves around the factors that prepared the emergence of film festivals around the world and the festivals in Turkey. While the first festivals in the world emerged in the interwar period, the first festivals in Turkey date back to the heyday of Yeşilçam. The first festivals in Turkey emerged in the South and South-western Turkey in the 1960s, while the IIFF commenced directly after the military regime in 1983. While the implications of these 'local' issues are discussed in this section, the section also goes against reducing 'national' film cultures to their local settings. In this regard, by pointing to other global case studies and film festivals, this section embraces a cosmopolitan look at the IIFF's context. Finally, the third section of this chapter argues that the main line of earlier research perspectives relies on a Eurocentric understanding of film festival research and circuits up until the present day. The film festival circuits, the

existing research on film festivals and their audiences, took European film festivals as reference points, whereas the intention in this chapter is to go beyond it.

4.2.An Overview of the History of Cinema in Turkey

This section involves a chronological history of cinema in Turkey, in the context of the social, cultural, political and economic changes which have occurred within the country. It embraces a distribution and exhibition point of view, which implies that rather than an emphasis on individual films, film production, genres, films and directors' oeuvre, the section provides the background for a deeper understanding of contemporary festival culture in Istanbul and Turkey. Although cinema travelled to nearly everywhere across Turkey, the section also focuses on its journey in Istanbul as the centre of cinema and media in Turkey.

Throughout its history, film culture in Turkey has relied on a multiplicity of sources, influences and settings. The first film screening in Turkey took place during the Ottoman Empire on the 12th of December in 1896 in a pub called Salle Sponeck on the Istiklal Street, Beyoğlu¹⁵, which is also the centre of the IIFF today. It was mainly the Christian population in and around the Beyoğlu area who participated in this screening. 'The first screening in a region with a predominantly Muslim population live, in one of the neighbourhoods of Fatih, took place a year later, which was different from the former one, both in terms of the setting, the neighbourhood and the participants' (Arslan, 2011: 25-26). After the first screenings, Sigmund Weinberg initiated the construction of the first movie theatre in Turkey in Beyoğlu in 1908. After 1908, it was mainly the non-Muslim communities in Istanbul who opened several other movie theatres. As a building, The EMT's construction also dates back to the same time period, 1884. It was built as a school before the invention of cinema and turned into a

¹⁵ *Beyoğlu* was known as *Pera* at the time.

skating palace in 1909. In 1918, the EMT was converted to a theatre according to the needs of the period, as theatre was a popular art at the time. In this respect, the early beginnings of cinema as an art date back to the Ottoman Empire in Turkey.

The war of independence in Turkey was fought between 1921-1922, which marks the transition of the Ottoman Empire to the Turkish Republic. In the aftermath of the Peace Treaty of Lausanne, Turkey became an independent republic in 1923. The sultan and caliphate were abolished in 1922 and 1924 consecutively. Between 1919 and 1922, cinema in Turkey was also mainly under the control of the military, and the army documented their own actions and experiences during the First World War (Esen, 2010: 17). The first studio and film production company, which was called Kemal Film, also dates back to 1922 (Özön, 1985: 344).¹⁶

In the 1920s, many movie theatres were opened in the Beyoğlu area, which was the centre of culture in Istanbul. In the 1920s, the Şık Movie Theatre was one of the most popular movie theatres in Beyoğlu, which was also initiated by Sigmund Weinberg with the name of the Cine-Palace¹⁷ in 1914. In 1920, the Alkazar was also opened with the name of Cine-Salon-Electra (Akçura, 2004: 1989). The Alkazar 'educated' many cinephiles in Istanbul, including my informants, for decades and it was closed in 2010 because of the financial downturn. In 1924, the EMT was reopened as a movie theatre and it was initially called the Melek movie theatre. The Rüya movie theatre was also constructed in the same complex with the EMT in 1930 with the name of 'the Artistic', which then took the name, the Sümer Movie Theatre (Özkaracalar, 2015b: 171).

¹⁶ This was followed by the establishment of the Ipek Film in 1928, which remained one of the most important production companies in the history of cinema in Turkey.

¹⁷ Instead of this movie theatre, there is a bank (the Akbank) at the moment (Akçura, 2004: 80).

During the early years of the republic, The Republican Party (CHP) had established a power monopoly and, at the party congress of 1931, Turkey's political system was officially declared to be that of a one-party state (Zurcher, 1993: 176), which ended with the elections in 1946. In this background of a single party state from 1923-1946, cinema was also a 'one man show' in the early days of the republic. Muhsin Ertuğrul, with a pro-Western image, was behind any film or company related to cinema at the time. This period between 1923 and 1939 is commonly referred to as the 'stage artists' era, with particular reference to Muhsin Ertuğrul. Up until the 1930s, not many films were produced in Turkey; the number of all films does not exceed 30. At the same time, 'there was also no law regulating the film business until 1932; however, the city governors of the Ministry of Interior Affairs were accepted as fully authorised to oversee the matter. In 1934, 'the Regulation regarding the Control of Films and Film Screenplays' was formulated as part of the 'Police Duty and Authorisation Law' and executed with minor revisions until 1977' (Erdoğan & Kaya, 2002: 53-54). Teksoy calls this a 'police censorship' of the Turkish state, which prevented the filming of different aesthetic and narrative styles in the cinema of Turkey up until the 2000s (Teksoy, 2007: 34-35).

From the 1940s onwards, the pace of film production and exhibition increased, which ultimately gave way to a massive film industry. 'The 1940s were usually described as a 'transitional period' from a theatre-oriented approach to a cinematic style. 1948 marks the 25 percent reduction of the municipal tax on domestic films, which gave a boost to the commercial film industry' (Erdoğan & Göktürk, 2001; Suner, 2010). This announced the new beginnings of a film industry in Turkey. According to Erdoğan and Kaya (2002: 48-50):

In 1948 Turkey also signed an agreement of economic cooperation with the US in order to be included in the Marshall Plan, which was the result of the US decision to support the economic development of European countries whose economies were damaged during the war with the mission of saving the world from Soviet communism. It was during the reign of the Democratic Party (1950–1960) that the Americanist foreign policy of Turkey reached its peak. Accordingly, 'Americanism' was becoming fashionable in the everyday life of Turkey. As an example of

this, American movies became dominant in the Turkish market during the Cold War.

The political changes in Turkey in the 1950s, e.g. the Marshall plans, had an impact on the films to be distributed and viewed, since, at the time the majority of the films were American. Beginning from the 1950s, the Turkish state not only became more populist, but it was also integrated into the world political and economic system following World War II (Keyder, 1987). Turkey became part of NATO, benefited from the Marshall Plan, participated in the Korean War, and a decade later started the process of entering the EU. However until the 1980s, Turkey still had a largely closed economy with heavy taxes on imported goods (Özyürek, 2006: 15).

In the aftermath of the ‘transitional period’ in the 1940s, the film *Vurun Kahpeye* (Ömer Lütfi Akad, 1949) is commonly discussed as the film to pave the way to a new era; Yeşilçam (Teksoy, 2007: 29). Yeşilçam (Pinetree) is mostly referred to as the Turkish Hollywood, active between the 1950s until the late 1980s. ‘The most popular films of Yeşilçam were comedies, historical action and adventure, detective and gangster films’ (Mutlu, 2010: 428). During the Yeşilçam era, a large number of films were also melodramas and comedies, with a strong star presence. The sources and representations during the Yeşilçam era were quite wide-ranging. To illustrate, Erdoğan (2002: 236) draws attention to the tradition of Ottoman non-illusionism that Yeşilçam inherited, such as the Karagöz (shadow play). These traditions are extinct today, but their traces, Erdoğan argues, can be found in the Yeşilçam's narrative and stylistic devices.

The Yeşilçam film industry was named after the Yeşilçam Street in Beyoğlu, on which most of the production companies were based. The Yeşilçam Street was home to not only the production companies but also large format movie theatres like the EMT. Following its persistent growth in the 1950s, Yeşilçam was very popular and dynamic in the 1960s, and the Yeşilçam Street on Beyoğlu turned into “our street,” a communal world of departure (Arslan, 2011: 232). It was a meeting place for not only the workers of the sector, but also for film audiences. Whilst the first film production companies

date back to the 1920s, in the 1950s there were 126 new companies, most of which were situated in Beyoğlu (Kirel, 2005: 56). This also accounts for the significance of Beyoğlu in the history of cinema in Turkey.

However, this is not to say that the Yeşilçam's networks were limited to Beyoğlu and Istanbul. From the 1950s onwards, Yeşilçam films were distributed to everywhere in Turkey. During the 1950s, Arslan claims (2011: 76-77), the producers had relative control over the exhibition of films. Production companies had to rely on their affinity with the owners of first-run theatres. In this early Yeşilçam era, there was not a fixed distribution system, so the producers sold films to the owners of these theatres for a fixed price. The producers travelled all around Turkey in order to sell these films. With migration and the spread of film theatres to small towns in the 1950s, the Yeşilçam films spread to all over Anatolia, even when most of the production companies were based in Istanbul. By the 1960s, Yeşilçam was one of the largest national industries in the world, with an average of 200 films per year.

At the same time, there were also alternative settings of film screenings, from open air-cinemas to large-format movie theatres from the early Yeşilçam era onwards. In the meantime, the Emek reopened in 1957 taking its name 'the Emek'. It hosted the Turkish galas of many ground breaking films from Turkey, Europe and Hollywood such as *The Bicycle Thieves* (Vittorio De Sica, 1948), *Hakkari'de Bir Mevsim* (Erden Kıral, 1983) or *2001: A Space Odyssey* (Stanley Kubrick, 1968) (Köstepen, 2015: 75). In 1958, the Sümer movie theatre became 'the Little Emek' after its renovation. It then took the name the Rüya in 1963, but was demolished as part of the Cercle d'Orient (Özkaracalar, 2015b: 171).

Turkey saw its first military intervention in 1960, which was followed by the introduction of a new constitution in 1961. Thanks to the 1961 constitution, unions and other civil societal organisations demanding socioeconomic equality and socialist parties started to be represented in the parliament. This was reflected in film narratives as social realist films about urban life, migration and melodramatic fantasies of vertical class movement (Arslan, 2011: 100). Due to the rise in the number of films and ticket sales, a cinephile culture in the country

also developed around the same time. In the 1960s, many small-scale film competitions were organised in Istanbul and Izmir (Arslan, 2014: 135-136). Additionally, in the 1960s, 224 new production companies started to operate, while in the 1970s the number of these companies increased to 237 (Behlil, 2012: 20) even when they did not last long. In 1972, 299 Turkish films were produced, making Turkey one of the most prolific film industries in the world. It is important to note that during the 1970s ‘the Islamic “National Cinema” movement was critical of the commercial Yeşilçam Cinema for its uncritical appropriation of a modern Westernized life-style’ (Suner, 2014: 46). In this regard, Yeşilçam was not the only cinema tradition at the time and the history of cinema in Turkey also represented the conflict between ‘the secular’ or ‘modern’ and ‘the Islamist’ identities in Turkey.

Especially during the 1960s and 1970s, Yeşilçam films reached and entertained audiences not only in Turkey but also in other Middle Eastern countries such as Egypt, Iran and Iraq (Erdoğan, 2006). Additionally, Yeşilçam was also greatly influenced by other cinemas; this figure included both the cinemas of Hollywood and Europe in the West (Arslan, 2009: 85), and India and Egypt in the East (Erdoğan, 2006: 264; Behlil, 2010: 1-2). In addition, ‘90 percent of the Yeşilçam films were remakes, adaptations or spin-offs of previous novels, plays, films, film reviews or even publicity materials of foreign films. In these films, the original sources of the films were not given credit’ (Gürata, 2006: 242). Arslan calls this the Turkification of Hollywood, which implies ‘free adaptation incorporating home-grown cultural and moral elements such as the family feud’ (Arslan, 2011: 28). This shows the multiplicity of resources and cultural influences in the cinema of Turkey as well as its culture, while pointing to the presence of a wave of ‘early globalisation’ with regards to cinema in Turkey.

Turkey experienced another military intervention in 1971, which was on a much larger and more alarming scale and it ended with parliamentary elections in the autumn of 1973. The 1970s were marked by political polarisation, which resulted in the conflict between extreme right and left wing groups. The radical left, unlike the radical right, was not represented in parliament (Özbudun, 2000:

35-36). Although the 1971 coup coincided with Yeşilçam's peak years, it cut through Turkey's political, cultural and social life. It led to an initial rise in low-budget production and ultimately to a decline in the quantity and quality of the films (Arslan, 2011: 100). Towards the end of the 1970s, most of the films were pornographic films, which resulted in a crisis in the industry. Abisel (1994: 71) discusses that this made female audiences stay at home. The rise of pornographic films in the 1970s also gave rise to the opening and mushrooming of porn movie theatres across Turkey. These movie theatres were able to survive through the 1980s and 1990s. To illustrate their popularity, in 1995, 27 of 75 movie theatres in Istanbul were porn movie theatres (Özkaracalar, 2015a: 166).

The late 1970s concluded with another military intervention, which was the most severe and which radically changed Turkey. 'The 12 September 1980 coup marks an important turning point both in the history of Turkey and that of cinema in Turkey. Following the coup, the military regime restructured all social and political institutions in Turkey according to the 1982 constitution, which worsened the human rights record in the country' (Suner, 2010: 7). This meant less freedom for filmmakers to make films and the worsening of freedom of expression across the country. In this context, 'the role and the power of Islam has immensely increased, and especially in the 1990s, it became an effective and strong political, economic and cultural force that has dictated the changing nature of Turkish modernity' (Keyman, 2007: 223).

Suner (2010: 8) argues that after the military intervention, the term 'Turkish cinema' turned into a joke, connoting bad taste and banality, which was also reflected in the numbers of people attending the movie theatres. Most films that were produced in the 1980s relied on arabesque culture¹⁸, which was on

¹⁸ In Turkey, 'the arabesque culture began as a music genre with an Arabic flavour and infiltrated into cinema. Clearly masculinist, arabesque idealised the rural home left behind. It conveyed the sense of nostalgia felt by the alienated urban Anatolian for the old traditions. In the 1960s, Orhan Gencebay started the arabesque films range' (Dönmez-Colin, 2008: 40-41). It had an impact on the cinema of Turkey as well as most other arts, especially in the 1980s and 1990s.

the rise at the time. It is commonly agreed that after the coup and the military-imposed constitution, the popular Turkish cinema became estranged from its original audience. From an alternative perspective, Arslan (2011, 79-80) defines arabesque culture and cinema (similar to Yeşilçam itself) as 'Turkification from below' because while some of the Yeşilçam films resonated with the republican ethos in its aggression toward non-Muslim and non-Turkish minorities, some of them countered the projects of the Kemalist state by introducing elements of tradition and religion side by side with modernity.

Towards the end of the 1980s there was a surprising increase in the number of films being produced; 72 in 1982, 127 in 1985, 185 in 1987 (Teksoy, 2007: 73). This did not mean, however, that the number of films distributed and exhibited were as many as the ones produced. The fact that the majority of these films were produced as videos and not in the 35 mm format prevented their distribution and exhibition (Dorsay, 2004). At the very end of the 1980s, Yeşilçam's distribution and exhibition networks lost their power. The yearly number of people attending movie theatres was around 246000 in 1970, whereas it was 40000 in 1986 (Abisel, 1994: 118). This indicates that from the early 1970s to the late 1980s, the Yeşilçam films lost their impact and popularity in Turkey. Although the number of videos produced in 1987 was 185 due to the changing technology, these could not have impacted upon the ticket sales as they were not distributed. In this respect, larger import and distribution companies in the market were about to replace Yeşilçam, which lost its impact in the late 1980s. The Yeşilçam's ability to compete with them was limited, especially due to the rise of the popularity of private TV channels and the involvement of Hollywood companies in the exhibition and distribution of films in Turkey (Arslan, 2011: 207, Teksoy, 2007: 73).

In the 1990s, while Hollywood was slowly becoming the dominant player in the market, 'the previous cinema audiences were gradually turning to television. When Yeşilçam was over, the Yeşilçam Street in Beyoğlu, where the demolished EMT was also based, lost its dynamism' (Arslan, 2011: 233-235). Especially starting from this period, a more large-scaled period of marketisation and internationalisation blossomed, while the private ownership of television

was commencing at the same time. 'With the 1994 Code of Private Radio and Television Broadcasting, the monopoly of the state-based Turkish Television and Radio was officially terminated, which resulted in not only the emergence of hundreds of private radio stations and television channels but also other sectors of cultural and media industries such as advertisement or press have undergone a rapid growth process' (Suner, 2010: 9).

After the collapse of the Yeşilçam film industry in the late 1980s and early 1990s, Hollywood marketers invested in Turkey in order to regain control of the audience. Arslan (2011) shows that the stories that were dealt within the period of Yeşilçam did not wither away; they are, rather, constantly repeated on television. 'When Yeşilçam was over, the street had lost its dynamism. The people of our street moved to the studios of television stations or various production companies that popped up in the newer business centres of Istanbul. In the meantime, there has been a shift towards a younger, urban, modern and westernised film audience. Under the newly emerging global capitalist condition, private television channels, corporate ownership and Hollywood majors were the determining factors behind filmmaking, distribution and exhibition' (Arslan, 2011: 233-236). The fact that Hollywood was dominating the distribution network after the late 1980s not only points to the dissolution of the Yeşilçam film industry, but also marks the emergence of a new economic infrastructure. 'The distribution and exhibition of domestic films started to be provided by the US companies UIP and Warner Bros, which entered the Turkish market in 1987 and 1989 respectively. In addition to the hegemony of American companies in distribution and exhibition, with the introduction of Eurimages in 1990, European co-production was also feasible' (Arslan, 2011: 244-245).

Following the dissolution of Yeşilçam, the period between 1990 and 1996 is referred to as the 'dark age' of cinema in Turkey, as it was the time with the least number of films produced in the history of cinema in Turkey. The Islamic cinema became popular between 1989 and 1995, whereas its popularity was in decline after 1996 (Maktav, 2010: 32). 'The popular success of Islamic films, combined with the rise of political Islam in the post-1980 period, encouraged

other filmmakers to deal with more radical and timely issues such as the issue of the veil in universities but the new Islamic cinema of the 1990s, which is often referred to as Beyaz Cinema (White Cinema), remained constrained within melodramatic conventions and was unable to evolve into a permanent movement' (Kaya & Azak, 2015: 269). Suner (2014: 47), looks at this issue from another perspective, arguing that the Islamic films were primarily preoccupied with the idea of conveying a religious message rather than engaging in in-depth and critical investigation of Muslim subjectivity, as it could not have synchronized with the rise of other non-Islamic films in Turkey's new wave cinema.

1996 was a turning point for cinema in Turkey, which was marked by two films; *The Bandit* (Yavuz Turgul, 1996) on the one hand, and *Somersault in the Coffin* (Derviş Zaim, 1996) on the other (Suner, 2010). According to Suner (2010: 15), '*The Bandit* succeeded in the box office with 2 million 571 thousand tickets, whereas *Somersault in the Coffin* was not a commercial success, rather, it was considered as the inauguration of a new wave of art cinema in Turkey. While *The Bandit* represented a revival of the Yeşilçam, *Somersault in the Coffin* announced the beginning of a new wave Turkish cinema.' This new era is quite often referred to as the New Turkish Cinema. The films that have been made in this new era differ from the Yeşilçam period, mostly due to the new separation of popular/mainstream and art/independent cinema (Erdoğan & Göktürk, 2001; Dönmez-Colin 2008; Suner 2010; Arslan, 2011).

During the 2000s, many art house films were produced, which not only received national but also international acclaim, such as Yeşim Ustaoğlu's or Nuri Bilge Ceylan's films. This era is also marked by box office hits such as the series of *Recep İvedik* (Togan Gökbakar, 2008), which sold around 15 million tickets in Turkey in the 2000s. The 2000s also meant a new era for Kurdish cinema as an increasing number of Kurdish films were being produced and distributed by Kurdish directors such as Hüseyin Karabey and Kazım Öz. The 2000s also experienced 'a revival of the Islamist films, which focused on divine love and Islamic mysticism' (Maktav, 2010: 32). The AKP's 'reign' helped the wider circulation and success of Islamist films in the 2000s, increasingly so in

the 2010s. Suner (2010: 20-21) also points to the absence of women in the new wave of Turkish cinema, which is slowly changing in the 2010s, as more and more women directors are beginning to make films.

The exhibition of films in shopping centres also dates back to the same period in the history of cinema in Turkey, the early 1990s. In 1994, the AFM opened its first movie theatre in a shopping centre (in Akmerkez shopping mall, Etiler), which slowly changed film-going practices in Istanbul and Turkey. Before the mushrooming of shopping malls in every corner of Istanbul, film theatres were mostly situated in arcades and there were also independent large format movie theatres situated mainly in the centres of Istanbul. The general passage of life from the streets to the shopping malls in Turkey had an impact on people's lifestyles as well as movie-going practices. Starting from 1994, movie theatres in shopping centres multiplied and in the 2000s it became the main avenue for the distribution and consumption of films across Turkey. From the 1990s onwards, the majority of filmgoers in Turkey started to consume films in shopping malls, similar to other audiences in other parts of the world. The movie theatres as part of the arcades were slowly disappearing, although there are still a few of them in Kadıköy and Beyoğlu, for example, the Atlas, the REXX and the Beyoğlu movie theatres.

These developments in the film scene of Turkey were in a way responsible for people's increasing attendance at film festivals, the mushrooming of film festivals in Istanbul and the establishment and consolidation of new transnational audiences. The wholesale transformation of the political economy of the film industry triggered a significant transformation for film culture and enacted new possibilities for audiences in Istanbul. In addition, the fact that texts and genres of the films have also undergone a remarkable transition after the 1990s brought with it a new audience and film culture. Besides, traditional ways of production and distribution did not dissolve. Alternative venues such as the Atlas, the REXX, the Feriye or the Beyoğlu cinemas, which usually screen European or Turkish art house films in addition to mainstream cinema, still survive, as do the alternative ways of distribution

such as the popular pirate shops in Kadıköy like The End or the Orta Dünya, as well as a rapidly growing film festival culture.

This section has historicised the cinema in Turkey from its early beginnings to its present day in order to throw light on the film culture in Turkey, which has had a variety of roots, influences and impact. While the large format movie theatres were constructed mainly in the 1920s in Istanbul, their popularity dates back to the Yeşilçam era (roughly between the 1950s-1980s). The Yeşilçam film industry represented the rise of cinema in Turkey, which continued until the 1980s. As much as there was a multiplicity of sources and cultural influences since the early days of cinema in Turkey, state control and political intervention also operated through censorship and laws. The festival scene in Turkey also started during the heyday of this industry in the 1960s but it proliferated in the 1990s and 2000s. From 1996 onwards, art house cinema has consolidated as an important feature of the cinema in Turkey, which is represented by Nuri Bilge Ceylan's films within global film festival networks. Additionally, from *The Bandit* onwards, the general audiences returned back to the movie theatres (Erdoğan, 2002: 233; Suner, 2004: 306). From 1996 onwards, there are in addition a variety of different traditions of films in Turkey, such as Kurdish and Islamic feature films and/or documentaries, although censorship is an increasing problem. The same period marked the mushrooming of shopping malls, especially in Istanbul, but alternative distribution outlets still survived, especially the pirate shops. From the 1990s onwards, the number of European co-productions also increased as well as new international arrivals into the market. In conclusion, while there is a dominance of specific film industries or styles at particular times, I have also highlighted the existence of alternatives to these dominant forms, as well as the importance of spaces to the development of a particular cinema culture in Istanbul.

4.3.An Overview of the National and International Context of the IIFF

In this section, I chronologically tease out important landmarks of the IIFF's culture and history within its relationship to previous research on film festivals as well as the local and global cultural and political context. As I mentioned in the previous section, Turkey has faced a lot of transformations in terms of the film and media industries, especially since the 1980s. Picard and Robinson (2006: 5-8) show that the rapid increase in the number of film festivals around the globe is related to the contexts or eras of rapid change, linking it to the changing realities of economic and local-global relations. Accordingly, the emergence and proliferation of film festivals in Istanbul beginning from the late 1980s cannot be isolated to Istanbul alone, as film festivals have proliferated globally since the 1980s (Rüling & Pedersen, 2010: 318). I thus argue that not only the numbers of film festivals but also the film festival cultures are related to wider sociological, political and economic transformations. Film festival culture in Turkey cannot be separated from the rapidly changing national and global macro-structures.

Film festivals have created a prominent film culture across the world in the 21st century, however, their history is rather a long one. The first major film festival across the world was initiated in Venice in 1932 and the succeeding international film festivals were the Moscow International Film Festival, which was founded in 1935, and Cannes, which was initiated in 1939. While the first film festivals emerged in the interwar period in Europe, the emergence of other major film festivals like Locarno (1946), Karlovy Vary (1946) and Berlin (1951) dates back to the post-war era. Film festivals such as Edinburgh (1947) or Berlin (1951) originated within a particular moment of the urban regeneration of Europe in the aftermath of the Second World War (Harbord, 2002: 61). Additionally, the first known film festivals in 'other' parts of the world date back to the 1950s, i.e. India-Asia in 1952, Sydney-Australia in 1954 and Argentina-South America in 1954 (Ooi & Pedersen, 2010: 322). Film festivals have globally become so widespread that when it was founded in 1995, the European Coordination of Film Festivals listed 76 film festivals, whereas after only 5 years later, the number increased to 154, in only 20 cities (Turan, 2003:

2). Today, the industry experts estimate up to 3500 new film festivals will emerge in the world each year (Rüling & Pederson, 2010: 318).

Although the emergence and proliferation of festivals are linked to many other issues such as globalisation, migration, tourism and democracy, their emergence and mushrooming are also tied to cultural and creative industries. For De Valck (2007: 58), the emergence of early film festivals in Europe is tied to the inability of the European film industries to compete with the American cartels. Caves (2000: 99-100) argues that the emergence of film festivals in Europe is highly dependent on the fragmentation of the European film industries, when they are compared to the highly concentrated and vertically integrated studio system in the United States. It was hard for individual European films to be circulated and/or compete with American films in the market and thus film festivals emerged. This picture is similar to Turkey, as the festivals started during the high Yeşilçam era.

Contrary to popular belief, however, the oldest film festivals in Turkey were not organised in Istanbul, but in two Mediterranean cities in the south of Turkey, namely Antalya and Adana in 1963 and 1969 respectively (Akser, 2014: 141-142). Akser (2014) draws a parallel between the choice of Antalya, which is a south-western coastal town in Turkey with beach clubs and a relaxed atmosphere, to the choice of Cannes in France. On the other hand, Adana is a large city in Southern Turkey, near to the Syrian border and Akser (2014) claims that the festival's creation there is symbolic, as Adana is the birthplace of the internationally renowned Kurdish filmmaker Yılmaz Güney. As it was the case with the Yeşilçam film industry, the festival network was not confined to Istanbul, which is obvious from the emergence of the first film festivals in Antalya and Adana. The emergence of film festivals in Turkey occurred at the same time with the heyday of Yeşilçam in the 1960s and 1970s, where, annually, 200 films were being made and millions of tickets were being sold in Turkey. Harbord's research (2002: 72) shows that 'film is still a significant cultural product for the nation in terms of representation, a production economy, tourism and as a symbolic asset. Festivals, in this regard, remain a crucial

showcase for the symbolic capital of the nation' and they are usually expected to represent national cinemas within and beyond national boundaries'.

To illustrate, Czach (2004) relates the growth of Canadian cinema to the rise of the two main film festivals in Canada, namely the Toronto International Film Festival and Montreal World Film Festival. 'Although there is a problematic nature of film canons and their exclusionary politics, there is still a vital link between the rise of a film canon or an industry and the popularity and appeal of film festivals' (Czach, 2004: 80). In Turkey, Antalya, Adana and Istanbul Film Festivals are the biggest and most popular events in comparison to other film events and they are highly responsible for the growth and popularity of the New Cinema in Turkey.

The intention to organise the first art festival in Istanbul dates back to 1968. On the 25th of April, 1968 Nejat Eczacıbaşı said 'we have intentions to organise an arts festival like the European cities' (Yardımcı, 2005: 14). In this context, the IKSİ (Istanbul Foundation for Culture and Arts), which is sponsored by one of the richest families in Turkey, namely the Eczacıbaşı family, was founded in 1973. Nejat Eczacıbaşı, the founder of the IKSİ, was an industrialist and chemist of the Eczacıbaşı Company. Between 1993 and 2010 his brother Şakir Eczacıbaşı was the director of the IKSİ. The Eczacıbaşı family's main business was the Eczacıbaşı Company, which was founded in 1942 and its core sectors have been pharmaceuticals, building, and consumer products. In her extensive research on the Istanbul Biennial in the context of the globalising Istanbul, Yardımcı (2005: 15) argues that the foundation of the IKSİ in 1973 was intentionally founded in the same year as the 50th anniversary of the Turkish Republic. Yardımcı (2005) relates the emergence of festivals in Turkey to the intention of integration with Europe and the 'education' of the public on European values. Additionally, Yardımcı (2005: 27-28) reiterated that the founders of the first festivals showed that they adhered to the values of Mustafa Kemal on every occasion. In this regard, the foundation of the IIFF was closely related to modernity in Turkey, a Westernisation process hand in hand with Turkification and laicism. As the IKSİ represents the republican values of 'modern' Turkey, they are in a way in opposition to the AKP's Islamist ideology.

This is not to say that they represent an activist institution, they simply represent a modern Turkish institution.

In her research on the state and business in modern Turkey, Buğra (1994: 6) shows that cultural foundations deal with the social legitimacy of business activity. Although the Eczacıbaşı family did not found the IKSŞ in order to make 'direct' profit, they founded it as a prestigious cultural sector in order to promote the renaissance of their 'name' and companies. The IKSŞ has also been organising music, jazz and theatre festivals as well as the biennial in Istanbul. Although it is not the scope of this thesis to provide a deeper analysis of the history and organisation of the IKSŞ, it is obvious that this foundation represents a monopoly of cultural affairs and events in Istanbul and Turkey, even when it is not a monopoly related to the dominant culture in Turkey.

The first arts festival in Istanbul was called the Istanbul Festival, which was organised by the IKSŞ in the same year of its foundation. It showcased classical music, theatre and opera between 15 June and 15 July 1973. In Istanbul, the first and most prominent film festival is the International Istanbul Film Festival, which was also founded by IKSŞ in 1982. Yardımcı (2005) relates the emergence of the Istanbul Biennial in the late 1980s, which marks the aftermath of the coup, to Istanbul's, and particularly Beyoğlu's, becoming an attractive location for global capital. In this perspective, the IKSŞ shared in a capitalist understanding of organisation, as it was directly involved in the growth of rent as the defining characteristic of how land use can be organised and how culture is consumed (Yardımcı, 2005: 47). It is important to note the underlying relationship of festivals to global capital and urban politics. On the other hand, the emergence of the IIFF follows the aftermath of the rise of Yeşilçam in the 1970s and its decline in the early 1980s during the military regime. The emergence of the IIFF should also be related to the film culture in Turkey in the 1980s, which mainly revolved around the rise of the porn industry as a continuous forum for the local film industry when political limitations were dominating the film scene, apart from the audiences' shifting viewing habits from cinema to television (Arslan, 2011: 114). The foundation of the IIFF was, in a way, a reaction to these developments, in order to establish film as art against

‘film as low-brow’ as in the popularity of sex films, which is related to modernity in Turkey.

The IIFF has been a two week film event that has taken place since early April, 1982. The IIFF was initially called the Istanbul Film Günleri (Istanbul Film Week). In its first years, the films in the programme of the IIFF were taken from the foreign cultural centres in Istanbul and Ankara. Hülya Uçansu, the director at the time, applied to the Embassies in Istanbul and Ankara in order to get hold of the films, such as the Italian Cultural Centre in Istanbul, which contributed all the Italian classics to the festival (Uçansu, 2012: 92). The first press conference and simultaneous translation for the Istanbul Film Week happened in 1983 (Uçansu, 2012: 97-100). The Istanbul Film Week took the name of the International Istanbul Film Festival in 1989, following its recognition and accreditation as ‘a competitive specialised festival’ by the International Federation of Film Producers Associations (FIAPF) in 1988. The accreditation of the FIAPF implied that the festival was able to screen the films from the major distribution companies such as Warner Bros and/or UIP (Uçansu, 2012: 185).

In 1982, the overall ticket sales of the film weeks were 12,000, while it reached 140,000 in 1987 (Uçansu, 2012: 104). In its history, the IIFF attracted up to 170,000 people, with an average of 140,000 filmgoers in the 2000s, which implies that it is the biggest film event in Turkey. During the festival in 2013, the movie theatres were 84% full with 135,000 audiences in total (the IKSVM Activity Report, 2013). This percentage rose to 88% with 140,000 movie theatres in 2014 (the IKSVM Activity Report, 2014). In addition to various master-classes, panels, parties and concerts that are organised during the IIFF, the festival is organised in sections which include ‘the national competition’, ‘the international competition’, ‘out of competition section’, ‘NTV documentaries’, ‘the young masters’, ‘the mined zone’, ‘directors challenging the years’, ‘from the world of festivals’, ‘the Akbank galas’, ‘the kid’s menu’, ‘the anti-depressant’, and ‘the midnight madness’. Some of the other sections are temporary and relate

directly to contemporary developments outside of the festival, such as 'where are you my love' in 2014¹⁹.

Similar to the emergence of film festivals in Turkey during and after the Yeşilçam's heyday, in the 2000s, the increasing interest in the national cinema of Turkey triggered the proliferation of a vibrant film culture and film festivals in Istanbul. Beginning from the 2000s, the film festival scene has proliferated in Istanbul, concurrent with the popularity of Turkish and Kurdish films in the country and abroad. In the 2000s, several other film festivals started to be organised in Istanbul, such as the Istanbul Independent Film Festival in 2001, the Autumn Film Week in 2002 and the Documentarist in 2007. In the 2010s, the number of film festivals has been increasing each year and today there are many specific film festivals in the city throughout the year. To illustrate, in 2013, the *Başka* Cinema was initiated, in order to contribute to an alternative understanding of film going in Turkey. Using nine movie theatres in Istanbul and four movie theatres in other cities such as Izmir and Bursa, the *Başka* Cinema showcases alternative films from all over the world throughout the year, including art-house films from Turkey.

In the 2010s, the spatial organisation of the IIFF transformed, particularly due to the demolition of its earlier movie theatres. Up until 2010, the IIFF made use of the independent large format movie theatres in Beyoğlu, most of which are demolished today, like the Emek, the Yeni Rüya²⁰ and the Yeni Melek movie theatres. By 2014, the film festival still used the last two remaining large-format movie theatres in Beyoğlu, namely the Atlas and Beyoğlu movie theatres. The festival also utilised two other small movie theatres within two art museums in the Beyoğlu area, namely the Pera movie theatre in the Pera

¹⁹ For a more detailed discussion of some of these temporary sections for the audiences of the IFF, see sections 3 and 4 in chapter 5.

²⁰ The Yeni Rüya and the EMT were both located within the same historical complex of Cercle D'Orient. The Yeni Rüya movie theatre was consisted of 1000 seats and the last screening took place in 2010. It was demolished in 2013, to be replaced by the same shopping mall.

Museum and the Istanbul Modern Museum's movie theatre. The other movie theatres that were in use were other independent movie theatres in other districts of Istanbul: the Feriye movie theatre in Ortaköy and the REXX movie theatre in Kadıköy. By 2014, the festival also made use of a multiplex, called Nişantaşı City's in Nişantaşı, which is a luxurious district nearby the Beyoğlu area. The use of the Nişantaşı City's multiplex at the IFF dates back to 2009, which precedes the demolition of the EMT but the sensibility against its use within the IFF circles increased right before and after the uprising.

The above discussions demonstrate that film festivals are closely related to the social, cultural and spatial history of national film and media industries in their nation-states but that they are also tied to the global transformations and issues as well as local and global politics such as the demise of large-format movie theatres around the world. The current politics of the government and Istanbul's radical transformation affected the IFF and its audience, but the authoritarian history of politics in Turkey has had an impact on the culture of the IFF, both today and in its history. Ma's research (2012: 156) on the Shanghai International Film Festival highlights the state regulation of the film industry in China with regards to overseas entries for Chinese film festivals, which hindered the flexibility of programming and its culture. Despite the historical, social and cultural differences between China and Turkey, Turkey also has a long tradition of authoritarian politics, as the RTÜK (The Radio and Television Supreme Council of Turkey) operates in a relatively similar way to SARFT (The State Administration of Press, Publication, Radio, Film and Television in China).

In 1988, *The Last Temptation of Christ* (Martin Scorsese, 1988) was screened as part of the IFF and it was subjected to the Islamist radicals' protests outside the EMT. A crowd of 150 people gathered to protest against the festival (Uçansu, 2012: 200). In 1988, the RTÜK also intervened on the screening of five films at the IFF, including *Betty Blue* (Jean Jacques Beineix, 1986) and *Vedreba* (Tengiz Abuladze, 1968), the former as it was perceived to include too many 'sex scenes' and the latter for being 'anti-Islamic'. Elia Kazan, the head of the Golden Tulip Jury in 1988, organised a protest with other filmmakers and jury members. Upon these protests, the Turkish Ministry of

Culture issued a decree holding all ‘foreign’ films at international film festivals in Turkey exempt from the censorship.

In this section, I have discussed the emergence and growth of the early film festivals in the world. I also highlighted the IIFF’s connection to the national film industry, film culture and Istanbul’s urban structure and politics. The section shows the details of the IIFF culture, from its venues and the sections of its programme, which will throw light on the discussions in the following chapters. While the festival is closely related to the national film history and culture in Turkey, its connections to the global film festivals were also the foci of this section. This section also underlines the IIFF’s close affinity with politics in Turkey from its inception onwards. Apart from the IIFF, this section also accounted for the growth of film festival culture in Istanbul in the 2000s. Within this framework, although there is a multiplicity of festivals in Istanbul at the moment and an increasing impact of digital culture on film audiences, the IIFF still maintains its impact and the interest of its audiences and remains an important feature of culture in Istanbul.

4.4.Eurocentrism in Film Festival Research and Circuits

To date, the common framework of research on festivals lies in its perspective on the origins of film festivals as European phenomena and their tendency to research European film festivals in order to understand the emergence, growth and impact of film festivals across the world. This is true not only for European but also Turkish researchers. In addition to the existing research on the issue, the founders, organisers and audiences also take European film festivals as models. However, I point out that even when some of the IIFF audience looked up to the European models, the political action and the feeding of social movements enabled this research to go beyond the ‘ideal’ model of ‘big’ European festivals in festival research.

The 2000s mark the early endeavours in the scholarship on film festivals. For Evans (2007: 33), the liminal space of festivals has posed a coherent

challenge to Hollywood ever since the first film festivals in Europe, and the increasing success of the so-called marginal films around the globe indicates that the European film festivals might have a central role in the evolution, success and expansion of world cinema in the 21st century. Evans directly connects the growth of world cinema to European festivals. In her book, which examined four European case studies; Cannes, Berlin, Venice and Rotterdam, De Valck (2007: 14) also highlights Europe as the 'cradle' of film festivals. In this research, De Valck generalises her findings to other 'global' festivals. The foundational research on festivals relies on Eurocentric perspectives and case studies and over-generalises the expansion of world cinema and festivals to the European festivals.

Based on her ethnographic and archival research into a variety of film festivals, Wong (2011) notes that the attempts at theorising festival films²¹ and film festivals still involve a 'European Gaze' on film festivals (Wong, 2011: 4). As European ideas and concepts have had such an extraordinary effect, in the last hundred years, that Euro-centrism or the European Gaze has permeated all social science disciplines, which grew out of the historical process of western colonial and economic dominance and provided justification for further dominance (Joseph, Reddy & Searle-Chatterjee, 1990: 1). In this standpoint, non-Western cultures are unfavourably compared to the Western ones, even long after the end of colonialism. This is in no way suggesting that non-

²¹ Following Elsaesser (2005), festival films can be described as films that are 'made to measure and made to order' for the festival circuit, creating a 'genre' (Elsaesser, 2005: 88). Today there are many auteurs like Jean-Pierre and Luc Dardenne, Bruno Dumont, Abbas Kiarostami, Wong Kar Wai and Nuri Bilge Ceylan 'whose careers have been established and supported by the film festival circuit and whose work, arguably, forms an international auteur cinema, which cannot compete with Hollywood in terms of box office but whose dissemination transcends the national' (Mazdon, 2007: 14). Furthermore, as pointed out by Wong (2011), 'the most characteristic festival films might be the ones focusing on personal journeys in which the subject matters are devoid of any direct political or social references or contexts' (Wong, 2011: 89). To illustrate, *Persona* (Ingmar Bergman, 1966), *The Piano Teacher* (Michael Haneke, 2001) or Nuri Bilge Ceylan's *Winter Sleep* (2014) are typical festival films, which, in Wong's words (2011), are apolitical but deal with basic, essential human emotions.

European people are better than Europeans or that Third World and minority cultures are inherently superior (Shohat & Stam, 2014: 3). The underlying implication here is that the study of film festivals would certainly benefit from a diversity of different case studies from around the world, especially in order to have a deeper understanding of the implications of 'global'.

Research in recent years has started to conceptualise film festivals in other parts of the world, outside of the main axes of the European festivals (e.g. Simanowitz and Santaolalla, 2012; Ma, 2012; Farahmand, 2014; Martinez et al., 2015). Fairly recently, there are collected volumes and articles on film festivals in different parts of the world, outside Europe. Iordanova and Van de Peer's (2014) edited book entitled *Film Festivals and the Middle East* is the first collection of chapters that conceptualise and historicise film festivals in the Middle East. This volume, as well as *Film Festivals and Activism* (Iordanova & Torchin, 2012) aimed to challenge 'the European Gaze' within film festival research up until today. In these volumes, the examinations on the particular film festivals from Iran to Mexico, and from the Czech Republic to Egypt provide ground for discussions on the activist and transformative aspect of film festivals beyond the main film festival canons of Europe.

This is not to say, however, that the 'European Gaze' can only operate in Europe, on European festivals or by European people. Ran's research (2011) shows that in order to highlight its international profile, the Shanghai Film Festival relies on a line-up of Euro-American films, rather than new Asian films. According to Ran's research, the festival remains ambiguous regarding its self-positioning within both the regional and the global film festival scenario (Ran, 2011: 156). In this framework, the film festival does not look at its own cultural sources, but rather looks up to the European and American sources, even when the film culture in Asia is as prominent and multi-layered as it is in the West.

In *Film Festivals and the Middle East* (Iordanova & Van de Peer, 2014), some of the case studies also take the European festivals as reference points. For instance, Frodon's (2014: 23) chapter in the book concludes saying that 'now the festivals in the Arab world come closer to the European or Asian

models for such events', thus takes film festivals in Europe as 'ideals'. His description suggests that the festivals in the Arab world need to strive for 'reaching' the European model of the festivals. Farahmand's article (2014: 99) in the same volume, on the Tehran International Film Festival, describes the festival as 'having the ambition of becoming the Cannes of Asia'. In this regard, the European literature on European film festivals, the literature on Middle Eastern festivals and the film festival circuits often embrace a European gaze on film festivals. The research on the issue and the film festival organisations and circuits remain impervious to the voices of their own regions, whereas the Eurocentric approach to festival research is subject to change due to the increase in the number and quality of the new empirical research in the area.

Similar to the underlying perspective of the above theoretical and historical approaches to film festivals, some of my informants followed mostly European films or took European film festivals as models/reference points, especially before the uprising. The fact that some films from Turkey received awards in European film festivals, especially the Berlinale and Cannes, was an important criterion for a fair amount of my informants. Mehmet (26, a student and freelance photographer) started to hear about 'the festival films', even those from Turkey, through these main festival circuits. He said:

I did not know about *Uzak* (Nuri Bilge Ceylan, 2002) when it was on cinemas here, I heard about it when it won the best film award in Cannes. After *Uzak*, I started to follow the award-winning films from Turkey and abroad. If it received awards, I thought it must be a good film. Now I follow a lot of other films and have other criteria but prestigious awards from international festivals were my initial reference point and they still sometimes are.

This shows just how important European film festivals are in the collective understanding and evaluation of films, including in the Middle East. The fact that Mehmet heard about 'Turkish' films from the European film festival circuits is in relation to modernity in Turkey, which goes hand in hand with Westernisation. The will to become European and modern is embedded in the

cinephilia of this audience. The quest for modernity also means going against the Islamist ideologies of the moment. On the one hand, modernity in Turkey represented a complexity to reach and to be accepted by the European standards, on the other hand, it meant an intention to 'secularise' Turkey and overcome the Islamist organisation of social and political life.

In her research on the making of national cinema through the international film festivals, Chan (2011: 258) asks the question 'how the "national" emerges from a transient event that seeks to market itself as "international"'. In order to answer this question, she recommends 'a return to the historical roots of the modern film festival, and to consider the drive for internationalism inherently embedded in the national'. For Chan, 'the changing political climate in the 1970s saw the selection procedures of the major European festivals move away from national industries to include individual artistic achievement (coinciding with the rise of auteur theory and Hollywood's Film School Generation), and an interest in films from unfamiliar cinematic cultures, especially the ones sprouting from the revolutions in the Third World countries. Worldwide decolonisation boosted the idea that cinema could also function as a force for political resistance' (Chan, 2011: 259). This can also be applied to the IIFF, as it not only increasingly fosters lesser-known cinematic cultures from the world, such as separate sections on, for instance, Mexican cinema, but also sections to showcase Turkish and Kurdish films in order not to act impervious to its own historical roots.

The increasing availability of Turkish, Kurdish and other Middle Eastern films in the IIFF's programme stems from the increasing awareness of its own roots, which benefits from and contributes to the activist cosmopolitan atmosphere of the IIFF and the protest culture surrounding it. During my fieldwork in 2013 and 2014, I realised that the IIFF showcased more films from the Middle East, even in different parts of the programme, and they devoted more special sections on the cinema in the Middle East and Turkey. For instance, in 2014 there was a whole section on Syria and the festival also showcased many events on the history of cinema in Turkey. After the uprising, the attachment and belonging to 'our own sources and region' was an

increasing tendency which could be traced not only from my own and my informants' practices but also from the number of Middle Eastern films and events in the programme. In 2013, the number of Middle Eastern films²² was 56, in 2014 this number rose to 92 and it was 62 in 2015. These numbers included the films on the social movements in the Middle East, which were popular with all of my informants.

The increasing awareness of my informants for the films from the Middle East and others from 'different' parts of the world transformed my informants' festival attendance. Gül (30, a sociologist) articulated her reasons for coming to the film festival and her choices of the films:

I do not watch the films that are going to hit the box offices at the film festival; I have nothing to do with Galas at the film festival too. There is no point in watching *Before Midnight* (Richard Linklater, 2013) here. I watch the films that are never going to hit the box offices after the festival. For example, if there is a film from Far East Asia, I choose it. I choose political films and films on human rights, which challenge the Anglo-Saxon hegemony. I choose films on the Arab Spring or other ones which use oral history as a method.

Gül's choices of the films signified not only a wish for counter-hegemony to Hollywood films, but also one against Euro-centrism. Gül's response shows the changing understandings of cosmopolitanism and modernity in Istanbul, from a Europe-centred modernity to a subaltern and/or activist cosmopolitanism. Gül's practices also imply that her choices increasingly move away from the traditional understandings of 'the festival film.' Also, this demonstrates that most of my informants used the festival films as a means to access counter-cultural products. Similar to Elena's articulation of Arab Film Festivals such as the Cairo International Film Festival as a counter to Hollywood and Egyptian commercial cinema (Elena, 2014: 5), some of my informants' use of the IIFF and its

²² I counted the films, which were made in the countries of the Middle East, as well as co-productions, which included one of the countries in the region.

programme worked as a counter to the wider accessibility of Turkish and Hollywood commercial cinemas in Turkey, especially in the loss of alternative movie theatres.

In conclusion, during my ethnography, this audience community's understanding of cinema, as well as their understanding of culture and politics, was transformed. This was partly because, as this section underlined, some of the members of this audience community became more interested in their own cultural sources, in the cinemas of the Middle East, which for them did not mean that Turkish and Kurdish cinema were better than other cinemas or that they had nationalistic underlying purposes, but it implied that their own 'Eurocentric' perspectives decreased during the process of their politicisation. In my ethnography, I also came across audiences' Eurocentric perception on films and the film festivals, which I exemplified through Mehmet's learning about and valuing Nuri Bilge Ceylan's cinema through the film festival awards received from the main film festivals in Europe. This implies that there are different tendencies within my informants, which points to the complexity of film and film festival culture as well as modernity. This also has implications for scholarly research on film festivals as it necessitates empirical research in different settings, contexts and an extensive research approach rather than over-generalised claims on global festivals.

4.5. Conclusions to the Chapter

This chapter intended to show different aspects of film festival attendance. It first theorised the national history of cinema in Turkey, with references to important moments in the history of Turkey, as these moments closely impacted the production, distribution and exhibition of films in Turkey. Apart from pointing to the consequences of Turkish modernity, the three military interventions, the impact of American culture and Turkification on cinema in Turkey, the section noted important cultural points in the history of cinema in Turkey, such as the initial emergence of the Islamist cinema as a reaction to the Yeşilçam, which represented pro-Western values (Suner, 2014). It also shows that the

'international' and 'global' impact of cinema in Turkey which consolidated from the late 1990s onwards, with the emergence of the New Turkish cinema, although previous films such as *Yol* (Yılmaz Güney & Şerif Gören, 1982) won the Palme d'Or²³ in Cannes. This section also contextualises the proliferation of shopping malls in Istanbul in the 1990s, which is directly related to the changing audience behaviour at the IIFF in the 2000s.

The second section situates the IIFF within national and global film festivals, by also giving reference to the history of cinema in Turkey. While the festivals emerged in the world in the interwar period, the first arts festival in Istanbul dates back to the aftermath of the military regime in Turkey. This chapter shows the complexity of researching in film festivals, which are tied to modernity and originated in Europe, but expanded to other parts of the world. This thesis thus attempts to offer a fresh look at the film festival phenomenon by examining a festival audience in the Middle East. In this respect, by pointing out the history of cinema in Turkey with an emphasis on the distribution and exhibition and the history of the IIFF, I intended to provide a background that film festivals are tied to the national cinemas and the dominant exhibition and distribution avenues in their hosting countries. However, as global networks of distribution and exhibition, film festivals go beyond the national cultures. By also situating the IIFF within the existing literature, I intended to show the importance of empirical research within film festival research in order to transcend the Eurocentric understanding of the film festival phenomenon. The last section thus presented a critical perspective on certain strands of the existing literature about film festival research, which presents Eurocentric perspectives.

²³ The Palme d'Or (the Golden Palm) is the highest prize awarded at the Cannes Film Festival.

Chapter 5

Cosmopolitanism in the Festival's Social Space and Public Sphere

5.1.Introduction

Audiences come together and become communities within the social spaces of festivals. In this chapter I argue that film festivals are not only desirable spaces for film audiences due to the representations in the films, but also because of their feature of being public spheres. I demonstrate that film festivals are more than having access to alternative or festival films, as film festival attendance is a necessarily social activity, which connects to the later discussions in the chapter. By first looking at the social implications of the film festivals, I define them not solely in relation to the films showcased, but by their social value. Although there are various different platforms to reach festival films in the current digital era, festival audiences are still loyal to the festivals, which resulted from their implications as a social and professional network for their audiences. The social characteristic of film festivals turns them into public spheres and enables a cosmopolitan outlook within them.

In this chapter, I also define film festivals as public spheres by making use of Habermas's (1974, 1991) notion of the public sphere. The public sphere mediates between society and state, in which the public organises itself as the bearer of public opinion. Although the public sphere emerged in a particular moment in history, I discuss its general implications for society in Turkey in addition to its specific implications for the IIFF audiences. In this section, the aim is to show that film festivals can function as counter-public spheres in which different groups of people openly engage in public discussions and use the public sphere of the festival as a space where they critically engage with larger problems in society. The representations and events as well as this community's DIY events created a cultural counter-public sphere, whereby this community openly discussed their opinions, shared their emotions and took political action. In this respect, while embracing a Habermasian perspective, I describe a counter-public sphere (Calhoun, 1992; Zhao, 2008; Negt & Kluge, 1988; Wimmer, 2005; Downey & Fenton, 2003; Xing, 2012), which not only initiates 'rational discussions' as is the case with the bourgeois public sphere, but also enables emotional reactions and cosmopolitan identities.

In the last section of the chapter, the discussion revolves around the ways in which cosmopolitan individuals and communities are formed within the cultural counter-public sphere of the IIFF. This in turn created a cosmopolitan Istanbul in 2013 around the time of the Gezi uprising, similar to Werbner's (2015) articulation of Egypt before the popular uprising. The cosmopolitanism was feasible due to the possibility of recognising others' vulnerability in the counter-public sphere of the festival and social movements. I describe the resulting cosmopolitanism as activist cosmopolitanism, which goes beyond the official understanding of the nation state ideology, not only in the engagement with the 'distant' cultures, but also challenging the immediate cultural norms and taboos in Turkey. This chapter also injects empirical analysis into cosmopolitanism, which has, until now, been a largely rhetorical field of scholarship (Schueth & O'Loughlin, 2008), especially with regards to festivals.

5.2.The Social Implications of Film Festival Attendance

To understand the impact of film festivals based on the films being showcased is problematic and simplistic. The festival films in a given country gather a network of cinephiles around film festivals apart from feeding the national cinemas, but I discuss that it is actually 'the event' characteristic of film festivals that attracts people's attention to film festivals. The reason behind the increasing number of film festivals and the audiences' insistence on and loyalty to them is not only because of the festival films per se, as people can reach some of these films by streaming and/or downloading, but it is also because of the festivals' social implications. For Peranson (2008), 'film festivals have a number of advantages over regular art-house screenings in that festivals are events and we currently live in an event-driven culture/age. Because they are events, festivals have a greater promotional budget to attract audiences; they can market themselves as 'glocal' events in the city and locals as well as tourists take vacations around the time of festivals' (Peranson, 2008: 24). In this regard, festival spaces are not devoid of tourism, public relations and

advertising, which relates to the intention to create more numbers of people attending.

In their research on a music festival in Virginia, USA, Bowen and Daniels (2005) list the motivations to attend a music festival as the fun and festive atmosphere that offers ample opportunity to socialise and have new and non-musical experiences. Similarly by taking County Corn Festival as a case study, Uysal, Gahan and Martin (1993) attribute three motivational dimensions to the attendance of festivals and special events, namely excitement/thrills, socialisation and family togetherness. Similar to the above research, my informants used the IIFF as a social platform to become a community. All of my informants remarked on the social aspect of their attendance to the IIFF, which I observed to constitute the very basis of their use of it as a political and activist space. In this respect, their movement and later participation in the uprising also changed their motivations of attendance. Increasingly in 2014, my informants used the festival's social space in order to participate in democracy and citizenship.

The underlying motivation to attend festivals, based on Yolal, Çetinel and Uysal's research (2009) on the Eskişehir International Festival, can also vary according to age. While younger attendees place more emphasis on socialisation and event loyalty, older attendees participate for family togetherness. Although my findings did not point to the differences of age as impacting on motivations to attend the IIFF, I observed that gender played a role in my informants' attendance. My female informants' participation was more active than the male ones in both the festival scene and in the social movements during the IIFF and the Gezi uprising, which shows the increasing impact and power of women's and LGBTI's movements in Istanbul.²⁴

²⁴ Although it is not the scope and intention of this thesis to discuss this, there is a wide range of women's movements in Turkey from the late Ottoman Empire onwards, which was partly hindered by the 1980 coup. For instance, Sirman's research (1989) captures the march of 3000 women in Istanbul in May, 1987, in order to protest against domestic violence. Arat's article (1994) discusses the ways in which women's movements in Turkey contributed to democratisation in the 1980s. Towards the second

Accordingly, my informants highlighted the difference between the screenings of films as part of film festivals and the usual screenings of the same films in the movie theatres other than the festival time. One important indicator of this is that film festival audiences not only devote their attention to watching a particular film, but they also want to experience the films as part of the festival period. Ahmet (36, an editor) talked about the difference between the festival screening of a film and its screening on general release. He was actually very critical of this difference:

I remember seeing Björk's film *Dancer in the Dark* (Lars Von Trier, 2000) at the IIFF years ago. There were people sitting on the stairs, it was overly crowded. The second time I went to see the film with my girlfriend was on the general release of the film, because she missed it during the IIFF. There were five people in the movie theatre.

Ahmet pointed out an opposition between a screening during the time span of a film festival and its screening on its general release. This difference results from the underlying mostly social motivations of attending film festivals. De Valck (2007) also stated that certain films attract full houses and audience interest at festivals, whereas movie theatres remain unfilled and box office revenues become disappointing when the same films are released in the art house circuit (De Valck, 2007: 19). In this regard, it would be insufficient to describe film festivals with reference to the festival films in circulation because they also

half of the 1980s, women's movements were on the rise and they continued to grow in the 1990s. As part of the second wave of feminism, The Purple Roof shelter was opened in 1990 and since the beginning of the 1990s, other women's organisations were established in the country, though mostly in urban areas (Diner & Toktaş, 2010: 46). The Turkish LGBTI movement became more visible in the 1990s, while the most notable attempt was the LGBTI pride conference in 1993 (Ataman, 2011: 132). After the foundation of the first LGBTI organisation KAOS GL in 1994, many other organisations were established in the late 1990s and 2000s. For the context of this thesis, it is important to note that both movements were quite visible and at the forefront during the OG uprising (Yıldız, 2014; Potuoğlu-Cook, 2015).

provide their attendees with the opportunities of socialisation and interaction. For some of the audience, this aspect of the festival is perceived as problematic. In April, 2013 (before the uprising), Ahmet, for example, was critical of 'the festival economy', which, for him, implied a showing off of a certain segment of society. However, his experiences changed remarkably after the Gezi uprising and he thought more positively and less critically about the transformational, social and political characteristic of cultural spaces like film festivals.

My informants used the IIFF in order to participate in a community and they felt a sense of belonging to it. They attended the Q&A's and panels during the IIFF and regarded them as being as important as the screenings. Additionally, every other ritual, such as sitting in the same seat or talking to similar people during the festival, could also be discussed in relation to the social aspect of festival attendance. Ertan (58, a retired civil engineer) said:

You get to know people in time during the festival. One year somebody who I have seen over the years at the IIFF did not attend the films, so I was quite worried. I did not know the contact details of him and wondered if he was sick or something. I met some other people in the course of the festival over the years, with whom I communicated over the phone. The people I know have their own seats in the movie theatres, you know that they will come and sit there. We have a small community here.

Ertan pointed out the ties and rituals during the IIFF that turned this audience group into a community. These rituals are not only related to cinema itself but they also include elements such as communicating with people or sitting together during the films, which implied the coming together of a community. Increasingly after 2010, their socialisation also implied politicisation together. Ertan, as an owner of the Lale Card, knew that the same people would come and sit in the same place, not only because he was a 'regular' attendee of the IIFF, but also because there was a certain row that was allocated to the Lale Card owners, the deeper implications of which I will highlight in the fifth chapter.

As an example of the social characteristics of the attendance of the IIFF, I experienced many instances of sharing tickets, where my informants met new people, exchanged numbers etc. For instance, when I attended a film with Devrim (33, a civil society worker), another audience member gave her a free ticket while she approached the ticket booth to buy her ticket at the Feriye movie theatre. It is the social atmosphere and the feeling of collectivity attached to the festivals that make them attractive. Similar to Ertan, Zöhre (35, unemployed) also talked about the social rituals of the IIFF:

There is an atmosphere of constant solidarity whilst buying the tickets. While you wait in the queue, people at the other end of the queue learn that there are no more tickets to a certain film, you change your schedule or do something together with other people there.

Zöhre defined the social rituals in relation to 'solidarity' amongst the members of this audience community, which I observed as the basis to an increasing political use of the film festival. Due to the authoritarian regime, the social interaction of the audience members also transformed into political solidarity, they felt the need to act together at the IIFF and the uprising in addition to 'having fun' together at the festival. At this point, the concept of solidarity needs to be addressed. An 'imagined solidarity' can be defined as one which is forged spontaneously among different actors who come to a consensus by imagining and subjectively constructing common interests and shared values between themselves (Bayat, 2005: 904). As quoted by Trandafoiu and Yılmaz (2015: 6), Jenkins (2006: 156) refers to this as 'semiotic solidarity', on the basis of shared tastes and interests, which opens up consumers to alternative cultural practices. But such imagining by the different fragments is by no means carried out in homogeneous fashion. Even when there were actual solidarities between some audience members, there were also other instances when people did not let press members or temporary workers of the IKSŞ (people with access cards but not reserved seats) sit on the empty seat next to them with reasons such as 'I will put my coat on it' or 'it is already squeezed here', which accounts for the 'imagined' aspect of solidarity, that despite such behaviour would nevertheless be generalised.

In examining the social feature of festival attendance, 'professional' socialisation and networking should also be emphasised. It is also not surprising that 'students and young professionals undergo part of their professional socialisation at festivals' (Rüling & Pedersen, 2010: 319-320). The professional socialisation at festivals entails networking for further projects in filmmaking, research or other film and media related business. It not only implies bonds of personal relationships with other audiences, but it also entails the production of content. In this context, film festivals can also imply professional socialisation for some of their attendees, which means career opportunities in creative sectors. As an example of this, from 2006 on, the IIFF launched 'the Meetings on the Bridge' programme, which aims at bringing together the representatives of European film institutions with Turkish producers and directors to discuss funding opportunities for filming projects. Another objective of this two-day conference series is to create a meeting platform where the European producers seeking collaboration opportunities with Turkey can meet their Turkish counterparts to discuss the co-production potentials and the difficulties encountered so far on the projects they wanted to realise. For instance, one of my informants Zuhail, who was a newly emerging short and feature films director, was about to collaborate on a project with a European counterpart in 2014, whom she met through 'the Meetings on the Bridge' in 2013. In 2014, I attended a panel on 'the directions of political cinema in Turkey' with Zuhail, which was part of the events organised in order to celebrate 'the 100th year of Turkish cinema'. After the event Zuhail (31, a short film director) said:

For me, the events at the IIFF are as important as the films. Today I met two directors that I wanted to meet for a long time; Emin Alper and Kazım Öz, during the panel on 'the political cinema in Turkey'. I went to 'the new directions in horror cinema in Turkey' panel yesterday and met another director. We started to talk about a potential collaboration yesterday and exchanged contact details and we will meet after the film festival. I use the film festival as a school for watching other people's films and also to have a chance to make something on my own and with other people.

While Zuhail's case articulated the IIFF's professional opportunities for its audiences, it also demonstrated film festivals' different roles, in addition to the screening of festival films. Zuhail, as an audience member and a filmmaker, not only collaborated with filmmakers from Turkey through the IIFF but also with a filmmaker from another country, apart from socialising with other audience members. According to Turan (2003: 7), 'there are several reasons for the current mushrooming of film festivals around the globe. One of the most important reasons is the hunger of the newly active, independent and foreign-language filmmakers to have access to audiences around the world and to be appreciated by the audiences'. Filmmakers use film festivals both as an alternative distribution network, as well as networking opportunities, while audiences use them as alternative transnational social spaces.

The ongoing popularity of film festivals in the digital era is related especially to their social implications. Rather than seeing a film at home or on general release, film festival audiences prefer to see them during the festival time. Film festival audiences attend the festivals in order to see festival films, but seeing these films as part of the film festivals with film festival communities is a vital part of it. Socialisation during the film festivals in the queues, foyers, panels and other events not only help students and professionals to have wider networks in creative sectors, but it also has the potential to create cosmopolitan identities transform into solidarity and it can even lead to political mobilisation. However, there were also instances whereby this solidarity implied an imagined solidarity, which shows the variety of different ways of audience engagement with festivals.

5.3. The IIFF as a Cultural Counter-public Sphere

Film festivals' social implications are closely related to their functioning as public spheres. This thesis embraces a Habermasian (1974, 1991) perspective on film festivals, which can be defined as an optimistic viewpoint on the appeal and impact of these public spheres. Habermas' concept of 'public sphere' is related to the developments in Europe since the early sixteenth century, which shows

that it is a historically specific concept. Rowe (1990) explains the emergence of the public sphere in the sixteenth century by referring to a variety of economic, social, and political developments:

Economically, there was a qualitative increase in the volume of trade, which commoditized the Western European economy. This created the institutions of capitalism, such as modern banks, joint-stock enterprises and stock exchanges. Socially and culturally, a variety of new institutions arose to serve the needs of this new commercial public, together comprising a new communications sector. These institutions included coffee houses and salons, theatres, literary societies, public libraries, the novel and other new genres of popular literature, journals of popular taste offering art and literary criticism and social commentary, and, above all, the daily press. On the side of government, these changes were matched by a rapid expansion of the state apparatus and an accompanying separation of this apparatus from the person and household of the ruler (Rowe, 1990: 311-312).

Based on this context, the emergence of the public sphere is not only related to the ways the state operated but also tied to the ways people gathered together, accessed information and news.

For Habermas (1974) citizens enter into the public sphere when they confer with the guarantee of freedom to express and publish their opinions. It therefore expands political liberties. Within the context of the political public sphere, the public discussion is about issues related to the activities of the state. 'However, even when state authority is the executor of this sphere, it is not part of it. Only when the exercise of political control is effectively subordinated to the democratic demand that information be accessible to the public does the political public sphere win an institutionalised influence over the government through the instrument of law-making bodies' (Habermas 1974: 49). In the light of the above quote from Habermas, if the public has its own law and decision-making spheres to exert their own power over political control, governments cannot arbitrarily make their own laws and decisions. The public sphere thus acts as the guarantor of freedom of expression and the public's participation in the making of decisions in the face of the potential tendency of the government to control it.

Habermas (1974) maintained that the public sphere mediates between society and state, in which the public organises itself as the bearer of public opinion (Habermas, 1974: 50). As a mediator between society and state, the public sphere sets the necessary conditions for democracy. 'Because on the one hand, the society now confronting the state, clearly separated a private domain from public authority and because it turned the reproduction of life into something transcending the confines of private domestic authority and becoming a subject of public interest, that zone of continuous administrative contact became critical also in the sense that it provoked the critical judgment of a public making use of its own reason' (Habermas, 1991: 24). Society has transformed through citizens' own decision-making in the public sphere. In Habermas' framework, the public sphere mediates between society and state; this arena renders the state accountable for its citizens and enables rational discussion of public matters. Calhoun questions the 'rational' feature of Habermas' notion of the public sphere, arguing that Habermas ignored the 'less rational' characteristics of public life (Calhoun, 1992: 111), even when he offered the best developed conceptualisation of social nature and foundations of public life (Calhoun, 1992: 43). Thus Habermas' account of the public sphere puts much emphasis on the citizenship and the rational and critical decision-making within the public sphere.

The theoretical reflections on the Habermasian concept of 'public sphere' 'enable us to not only recognise the exclusionary and class-dominated nature of the actually existing bourgeois public sphere and its antagonistic relationship with subaltern publics (Zhao, 2008: 13), but also to imagine the potential of counter-bourgeois public spheres' (Xing, 2012: 65-66). Although the Habermasian notion of bourgeois public sphere was not very exclusive or idealized, different formulations of counter-public spheres provide fertile ground for the study of democracy, representation and class divisions in the public sphere. As an example of this, Negt and Kluge (1988: 163) introduced the concept of proletarian public sphere as a counterpart to the bourgeois public sphere, which is defined as an effective form of counter-publicity. The reason behind its effectiveness as a means for criticism is that it is related to the potential emancipation of the working class (Negt, Kluge & Labanyi, 1988: 61).

Furthermore, the proletarian public sphere, in Negt and Kluge's framework, represents the interests and experiences of a much larger public. In its position vis-a-vis the dominant public sphere, the proletarian public sphere might enable the achievement of a broader representation for different groups, especially for less-privileged ones.

Wimmer (2005) describes the counter-public sphere as a strategy but also as a social process. Wimmer's definition of the counter-public sphere is as counter-public to the mass media, which also denotes a collective and political process of learning and experiencing within alternative organisations such as the NGOs. In this context, it is also related to the concern about democracy and communication as an emancipatory strategy for individuals, and works as a means to create a public for one's own alternative lifestyle (Wimmer, 2005: 95-97). Similar to the proletarian counter-public sphere, Wimmer's definition of counter-public sphere revolves around the 'alternative' representation and participation in the public sphere, which expands beyond the representation of dominant discourses and groups in the bourgeois public sphere.

Following Downey and Fenton (2003), I also want to argue that counter-public spheres become established in periods of instability in the dominant public sphere. In this perspective, counter-public spheres serve to destabilise the dominant public sphere in advanced capitalist societies because of a crisis of legitimacy and a loss of faith in the established institutions of the public sphere. 'Such a crisis may be expressed by the growth of apathy and cynicism but also by a growth of grassroots activism that situates itself as counter to the dominant public sphere' (Downey & Fenton, 2003: 19-20). In this regard, in the face of growing instability and the dysfunctionality of the bourgeois public sphere, it is more likely that there would be more counter-public spheres.

However, all of the above discussions in a variety of publications rest on Western public spheres. Today, the notion of public sphere is not only used for an examination of Western societies but also non-Western ones, such as the public sphere in modern China (Rowe, 1990), Vietnam (Drummond, 2000) or Brazil (Hanchard, 1994). Meyer and Moors (2005: 3-4) show that today there

are new arenas of debate on the notion of public sphere that are not fully controlled by the post-colonial nation-state and generate shared ideas, sentiments and moods among people who do not necessarily share the same background. There is also much research on the implications of public sphere in countries that are predominantly Muslim. From the foundation of the Turkish Republic onwards, Turkish secularism relied on the exclusion of Islamic symbols from the public sphere, such as the Islamic headscarf (Çınar, 2008; Özcan, 2015). Göle (2002: 173) discusses that public Islam challenges the borders and the meanings of the secular public sphere, while also making the national public spheres unsettled. While it is true that public Islam has challenged the previously secular and state-centered public sphere in Turkey, the symbols of Sunni Islam and religious lifestyles have become the dominant 'force' in the past decade during the AKP's reign. Rather than constituting a pluralistic public sphere in which religious and non-religious ways of life can accommodate one another, as suggested by Gökarıksel and Secor (2015: 21), the public sphere in Turkey is still state-centered, but this time reshaped by the devout Sunni elites. In this picture, film festivals and other cultural public spheres increasingly posed a challenge to the state-centred, neo-liberal and increasingly Sunni-Islamic dominant public sphere.

In previous scholarship on film festivals, there are accounts on the functioning of specific film festivals such as human rights, queer or radical film festivals as cultural counter-public spheres (Kim, 2005; Cordova, 2012; Torchin, 2012; Dönmez-Colin, 2014; Martinez, Frances, Agirre & Manias-Muñoz, 2015). It is generally pointed out that these small-scale film festivals create alternative public spheres for 'marginalised' identities since they facilitate the process of identity and subject formation and visibility for marginalised identities, which have long been 'othered' by the dominant public spheres. Dönmez-Colin (2014) deals with the visibility of women and women's films through the women's film festivals in the Middle East, such as the ones in Turkey, Israel, Iran and Lebanon. She discusses how these festivals are important in supporting individual women filmmakers and women's filmmaking, in addition to raising public awareness about gender issues (Dönmez-Colin, 2014: 40). In a similar vein, Cordova (2012) interrogates the context of indigenous film festivals in

Latin American countries, which are sites of indigenous struggle for representation. 'Indigenous film festivals offer a locus for the recognition of indigenous groups and strengthening awareness on pressing social and political concerns faced by the communities' (Cordova, 2012: 64). Furthermore, in exploring different human-trafficking festivals such as those in Calcutta, Nigeria, USA and Taiwan, Torchin (2012: 95-96) also underlines the film festival's capability of being a productive platform for promotion, outreach and support for a campaign, whilst engaging in fundraising and community building. Furthermore, exemplifying the Seoul Women's Film Festival, Kim (2005: 88-89) discusses the issue of recognition and how the film festival is part of this in the sense that it serves as a space for sharing between different actors involved, such as viewers, activists and academics. Overall, the literature on film festivals indicates that film festivals, especially the small and political ones, create visibility for marginalised groups, function as community building sites and lead to awareness on taboo issues.

Similarly, Tascón (2015: 3) examines two human rights film festivals in New York and Buenos Aires, in order to consider how human rights, films and film festivals have come together on a global scale. Through the comparison of these seemingly irreconcilable case studies, Tascón demonstrates how the films of a certain kind are brought together in a film festival to represent human rights. Unlike other research that I mentioned before, Tascón bases her research on her awareness that much of the discursive history of human rights weighted as a history of the West, as European and American struggles to loosen the grips of kingly power (Tascón, 2015: 5). Tascón's research informs my research in her concentration on the relationship between films, film festivals and activism from a non-Eurocentric perspective, although her research approach relies on the programming of film festivals, not audience research.

The understanding of film festivals as counter-public spheres is replicated in how my informants used and discussed the IIFF. For instance Kağan (27, a journalist) noted:

The audiences, film critics, academics, who do their own things throughout the year, get together at this festival. They have a chance to discuss and transform themselves altogether, with the help of the festival space.

The concept of 'festival space' emerged out of Kağan's engagement with the IIFF. For Kağan, his social engagement with the festival space not only implied the participation of different actors, but also professional networking with his colleagues and making new acquaintances. Furthermore, it meant that he used the IIFF as a cultural space and a public sphere for openly discussing his thoughts. However, the IIFF's space diverged from the bourgeois public sphere in Turkey as the alternative discussions within its sphere went against official discourses.

Loist and Zielinski's research (2012) on queer film festivals also describes these festivals as founded by activists and as grassroots entities, which function as counter-public spheres. Nevertheless, in contrast to the above scholarship, their account positions international film festivals and identity-based film festivals such as the queer festivals in opposition to each other. They maintained that up until the 1970s, 'the international film festivals were treated as a mode of international diplomacy under the control of ministries of foreign affairs and in mostly nationalist ways. Since the 1970s they have retained more regional political affiliations with relative programming autonomy but the emphasis is still placed on promoting a city's image, a national or regional identity and the local film industry' (Loist & Zielinski, 2012: 49-50). Loist and Zielinski's research idealised queer film festivals and did not account for cosmopolitan and activist potentials from the circuits of international film festivals, which I point out perhaps stems from their inclination to take Cannes and/or Venice as the reference points in conceptualising the international film festival.

Similar to Loist and Zielinski's account, Iordanova (2012: 13) defines activist film festivals in opposition to the mainstream film festivals. Iordanova identifies activist film festivals not in direct interference from regional/local authorities and/or film industries. These film festivals are rather supported by

NGOs, crowd-funding and other alternative ways and they feature concurrent debates, discussion forums and conferences, which provide a tribune beyond the confines of traditional academic institutions (Iordanova, 2012: 14-15). Iordanova describes a film festival as an activist one, 'if a more complete understanding of a film can crystallise and a call into political action can take place. Discussions at activist film festivals differ from the Q&A sessions at the mainstream ones; the primary goal is not to receive insight and information about the film's making and message but to go beyond the film and address the issues that film is concerned with, as well as to influence the thinking of the audience' (Iordanova, 2012: 16). In this framework, while activist film festivals can provide ground for the formation of counter-public spheres, its possibility at international film festivals is not the focus of discussions in the existing literature.

The underlying implication of the above research is that the programming and organisation of the film festivals can crystallise better understandings of films and call into political action, whereas there is not much room for the initiative of the general audiences. In the research on small-scaled festivals that revolve around human rights, women's issues or human-trafficking, film festivals function as a means to create awareness of and representation for marginalised and oppressed communities, while creating a possibility of community building and participation. However, as will become clearer later, my own research indicates that international film festivals can also have transformative and activist capabilities and function as counter-public spheres for their attendees. The festival's character of cultural counter-public sphere is born out of the practices and engagements of its audiences, rather than the impact of the name of the film festival (as in human rights film festival), the films being shown (as in films on human rights issues), the programme (as in a political understanding of a festival programming) or even the funding bodies (as in being independent from them). Stringer (2001: 136-138) defines the film festival's space as a series of diverse, sometimes competing and at other times cooperating public spheres and, additionally, as a new kind of counter public sphere. Counter-public sphere goes against the 'official' understandings and organisation of public spheres such as national assemblies. Rather than being affiliated with

the dominant ideologies, counter-public spheres function as more democratic (in the true sense of the word) and less homogenising spaces.

I describe the IIFF as a potential counter-public sphere not only because it enabled alternative subject formations for the audiences and recognition for marginalized identities such as the Kurdish or the Syrian, but they also facilitate political action and help to build an active citizenry. Additionally, the increasing movements and activism all around the world, such as the launching of the Occupy movements and the Arab Spring, also transformed the structure of urban cultural spaces like festivals and their attendees. It is not only the films and events on display but their merging with global social movements that turns festivals into sites for civic participation in democracy and creates an alternative sense of community and belonging. As an example of this, in the cultural counter-public sphere of the IIFF, the most important discussions were related to the Gezi uprising, the ongoing war in Syria, and the conflicts in Egypt in 2014. For instance, the audience community showed oppositional reactions to what they thought was a misrepresentation of the Gezi movement in the film *Istanbul United* (Farid Eslam and Olli Waldhauer, 2014), and protested against its future screenings in various film festivals. The Q&A session of *The Return to Homs* (Talal Derki, 2013), which presents a first- person experience of the damage of war in Syria, was full of fruitful discussions over what to do about the war in Syria and refugees in Turkish, English and Arabic, in the presence of the director as well as many activists from Turkey and Syria. The festival also hosted many events relating to the centenary of cinema in Turkey, for instance, the panel on political cinema. In this panel, Kazım Öz talked about what being a Kurdish filmmaker in Turkey has implied for him, and commented that Kurdish filmmaking is inherently embedded in a political situation, given both the diasporic nature of the Kurds and the culture of state repression and violence on Kurdish people that exists in many Middle Eastern states. As was the case in many panels and workshops, the first question from the audience tended to relate the issue to the Gezi uprising.

Ayşe (31, a research assistant) talked about how the counter-public sphere of the IFF was saturated with political discourses and references to social movements against the bourgeois public sphere:

There is constant reference to Gezi in the subtitles or in the discussions of the Q&As. For instance in the film *Half a Life* (Romain Goupil, 1982), the word ‘protestors’ was translated as the Çapulcular²⁵, which made everybody laugh and clap. In many of the films, subtitles, discussions and events, the symbols of Gezi were used and they created a feeling of community between the members of audience.

The Gezi culture changed the way the subtitle translators organised the subtitles, transformed people’s understanding of humour, the ways they acted as a community and, most importantly, the ways they participated in this counter-public sphere. The discourses of the Gezi uprising were present in all films and discussions in 2014, which also created a bond between the participants of the festival and an ongoing flow of discussions. These discussions included things-to-do for a better and more democratic Turkey throughout the festival, which usually stemmed from the representations in films and the discussions in the panels, such as the one on Syrian documentaries.

This is not to say that programming and the films were not ‘transformative’ or important for this audience community. The sections of the programme such as ‘the mined zone’ was popular amongst my informants because of the ‘difficult’ narratives and aesthetic styles in these films. ‘The mined zone’ section usually features quite challenging and difficult traditions of fictional films from around the world. For instance Perihan (38, a sales director at a travel management company) commented on the films in the ‘mined zone’ section in this way:

²⁵ Çapulcu, which can roughly be translated to marauders, was a common neologism in the OG uprising. It was coined from Recep Tayyip Erdoğan’s use of the term çapulcu to describe the protestors. This word was rapidly deconstructed by the protestors, which took the meaning of ‘fighting for your rights’.

In Turkey some very harmless poetry books and films are being censored. I feel that the existence of the 'mined zone' and other similar sections in the programme is very important, as they challenge the existing norms in our society.

The use of different sections, such as the 'difficult' section of the 'mined zone', meant a political engagement for Perihan. Her choice of the films from the mined zone implied an engagement with and participation in controversial issues that challenge existing norms of the bourgeois public sphere in Turkish society. The counter-public spheres such as alternative media and voluntary-run social and political associations faced hard times in the face of increasing repression in the 2000s Turkey. Alone in 2014 and 2015, thirty-two documentaries, fictional films and plays, twenty-six radio programmes, TV programmes and newspaper articles, twenty-three cultural assets and spaces and forty-three literary works were censored across Turkey (Bianet, 2016). In parallel to Duboc's research (2013) on the Egyptian cultural and political spaces before the uprising in Egypt, the difference between the cultural and political spheres dissolved in the face of increasing repression, as the government considers them as sites of resistance and attempts to silence them. In addition, the intellectuals created alternative spaces of protest due to the deficiencies of traditional activist structures. Similar to Egypt, in the face of increasing authoritarianism of the Islamist and neo-liberal government and the loss of faith in the conventional politics, the consumption of even seemingly apolitical films showcased as part of film festivals has become a political act for the film audiences in Turkey, especially after the uprising in 2014. Duboc's chapter (2013) on the leftist intellectuals' activism in Cairo in 2007, studies the overlapping practices of literary groups and political ones in Egypt that make it possible to identify political action and politicisation. The creation of alternative cultural spaces was identified as a form of opposition by the regime (Duboc, 2013: 56). Duboc's case study is important for this research, as the cultural spaces such as the film festivals, became politicised and identified as forms of political resistance by the AKP, especially after 2012, which marks the increasing authoritarianism and the beginning of regime change in Turkey.

Azize Tan (an organiser and curator of the IIFF) thought that the IIFF itself was in line with the social movements and recent developments in Istanbul:

We contribute to the activist culture here by organising a lot of film courses and master-classes on the recent political issues such as the war in Syria and the refugees from there. We invite relevant activists and filmmakers here. Our actual aim is to discuss 'What can we do?' via cinema. In doing this, we attempt to make sense of the current changes and crises.

Like other members of the audience, the organiser of the IIFF aimed to turn the festival into a political as well as a cultural public sphere, where the practices of cinephilia and political participation overlapped. The audiences of the IIFF discussed what they could do in forum-like panels on Syrian documentaries, Kurdish films and similar events. In opposition to the seemingly more 'elitist' or high-brow cultures of the festivals, the contemporary festival culture in Istanbul created an alternative space for participatory democracy. For instance, in one of the panels on the political cinema in Turkey in 2014, Kurdish films were discussed as a means to make peace and find solutions for a more democratic Turkey for Kurds as well as other oppressed ethnic and religious groups. Azize Tan also participated in the discussions after these films as part of the audience, which represented her own activist identity, but not necessarily the IKSŞ as an institution. Similar to the alternative cultural spaces in Egypt, which Duboc's research (2013) articulated, the Turkish ones have also signified an opposition to the dysfunctional bourgeois public sphere of the AKP regime, as in the case of the festival culture at the IIFF. As an example of this Janset (33, a film critic) said:

After Gezi Park, when three people got together for a press conference or demonstration, the police started to inflict violence. After the elections, we lost hope. I even started to wonder if the festival will take place or not, as it has functioned like an oppositional sphere.

In the face of the increasing state violence and the restriction of liberties, my informants used the film festival as a political public sphere against the activities of the state. Film festivals can become cultural counter-public spheres, especially in the face of growing crisis within the bourgeois public sphere. Their characteristic as an oppositional space stems from the discussions in them through the films on display, events and the social networks within them. The 'representation' crisis in the bourgeois public sphere impacted upon the audience behaviour, as this community started to hold on to it more than before.

While social movements that aim to create a more grassroots and participatory democracy are on the rise in the world today, there is inevitably an increase in the cultural counter-public spheres that feed social movements. In these spaces, the representation of different social movements and discussions on them further mobilise people and create a participatory culture. As an example of this, Bilgen (27, a cultural studies master student) said:

Nowadays, there are many films in the programme of the IIFF which give you an idea about social movements, such as the increasing number and visibility of Kurdish films. Of course, there are also more films being made on these subjects now, but they reach us via film festivals. We talk about the democratisation of culture due to the penetration of social media in our lives, especially Twitter. This democratisation also holds for films and film festivals. Because of the increasing accessibility of technology, more and more people can make films now and the increasing number of film festivals serves as spaces to showcase these films. For instance, people in Egypt made films during the uprising with their mobile phones and we watched them here in a couple of months' time, which creates activism and awareness.

Bilgen compared the IIFF today with the IIFF in the past, in respect to the visibility of the films portraying contemporary social movements. She also related the activism in Istanbul to the activism in these films. Rather than praising the past festivals (which was a tendency amongst my informants due to the use of only large format movie theatres during the IIFF before the 2010s), Bilgen thought that the 'authentic' festivals in fact happen today, even when

there is increasing penetration of neo-liberalism in the IIFF's spaces. For Bilgen, a reason for this lay in the fact that the IIFF showcased more films on the social movements from around the world. The global network of festivals, in addition to digital distribution avenues such as the Torrents, created more democratised distribution and exhibition networks circumventing the major distribution companies which dominated exhibition and distribution in the past. In addition, the fact that people have mobile phones or hand-held cameras has made it easier to film the social movements, on streets and in other difficult situations. In this sense, there is a clear opposition between the less-democratised filmmaking and distribution avenues of the past vis-à-vis the more democratised and proliferated production, distribution and exhibition avenues. The new social movements today influence each other through the globalisation of media and technology and thus a movement in Egypt can have an impact on another part of the world and can mobilise people in Turkey.

As the issue of citizenship is central to the concept of public sphere, I define these two concepts in relation to each other. According to Yeğen (2004: 51), citizenship is about the status a person enjoys as a member of a political community, which refers to a status, set of rights, entitlements and duties. In the liberal understanding of citizenship, it emphasises the legal rights between citizens and the state and accords a central role to the state in protecting and fulfilling these rights (Von Lieres & Robins, 2008: 48). This picture of citizenship is simplistic because citizenship today is in crisis and is constantly being reshaped, especially due to the impact of globalisation (Castles & Davidson, 2000) and the mass numbers of immigration (Joppke, 1999). While Castles and Davidson (2000: xi) suggest adding categories of gender and cultural rights in order to achieve full citizenship for minorities, Joppke (1999: 647) recommends the addition of special group rights to immigrants, instead of conforming to individual rights the principle of non-discrimination. In this respect, as is increasingly the case in Turkey, citizenship is not necessarily guaranteed in the relationship between the state and the individual, which is the reason groups such as immigrants, culturally and politically excluded groups and/or minorities should have different notions of citizenship. Citizenship is also usually seen as derivative of democracy and justice, as in citizens possess democratic rights,

but it is also commonly argued that citizenship must play an independent role in order to promote that responsible citizenship is an urgent aim of public policy (Kymlicka & Norman, 1994: 368). In Turkey, citizenship reflects a passive rather than active citizenship, a republican over a liberal one, and a citizenship colonizing the private sphere instead of one limited to the public (Yeğen, 2004: 54). In the increasingly authoritarian turn in Turkey, different communities and individuals started to question the problematic nature of Turkish citizenship. Yıldız (37, a camera assistant) related her shifting identity and understanding of citizenship to her use of cultural spaces:

I was a person who lived an activist lifestyle, which also applied to my relationship with the festival attendance. Even so, my participation in the festival and my choice of the films changed after I became part of the uprising. We decided to make our radio programme on cinema after the Gezi uprising. We also opened our own radio station as a collective of activists after the uprising to make our voices heard. The Gezi culture transformed the ways I relate to politics, media and cinema.

My informants' organisation of their lives and relationship to cinema and media were heavily influenced by their role and participation in the uprising. They gained more subjectivity and their understanding of citizenship changed in the uprising, which implies that their identities were also transformed. Other than using the IIFF as a counter-public sphere, members of this community organised into other public spheres like civil societies, political parties or media initiatives. 'Understanding the public sphere not only as a disembodied voice but also as a regime of visibility produced through the media and state-mediated discourses is particularly helpful for an examination of the production of the public subject' (Cinar, 2008: 894). Yıldız was a political subject before the uprising, but her use of the film festival and other public spheres like radios or social media transformed into an active involvement, a quest for visibility and participation. Starting her own radio programme after her involvement in the uprising is evidence of this.

The uprising recreated agency and active citizenship and a participation in democracy within both the counter-public sphere of the IIFF and the uprising. In 2014 some of my other informants thought that some discussions and the discourses in the counter-public spheres of the Gezi and the IIFF were overly romanticised and commodified. Sanem (37, a film critic) said:

Istanbul United was awful. We cannot accept it; we need to do something about it. Some filmmakers and intellectuals tried to take advantage of the political mobilisation of people, and they did so very early, without even digesting it. This was a discussion after the Arab Spring and it happened with Gezi too. They wait for it in an opportunistic way. Their line of thinking is 'even when I make the worst film, it would be accepted at the film festivals in the world'. *Istanbul United* was like this, I am really pissed off how scenes from football matches are juxtaposed with some police intervention from the uprising and the film sells itself as something about Gezi. Similarly, there are also many books on Gezi as of now, which is hard to believe. After only one month, in bookstores there were separate shelves on the Gezi uprising, which contained books of around 50 pages of photos.

Sanem pointed out the internal dynamics of the Gezi uprising and the IIFF, especially the divisions within; the start of the othering of parts of the movement, which used it also for commercial gain. This pointed out differences in this community's understanding of the meaning of counter-public spheres of social movements and festivals. For Sanem, the public sphere of the Gezi and the IIFF necessarily implied non-commercial spaces when this community's identities increasingly had anti-neoliberal/anti-capitalist features. The activist culture expanded to my informants' response to the films and led to their active participation in the decision-making processes, which can be understood from Sanem's intention to intervene in the circulation of a film that represented the uprising in a wrong or partial way. Hikmet (30, a social media specialist) also responded similarly to the romanticisation of the Gezi uprising and the commodification of the uprising:

When I heard about the making of *Istanbul United*, I was very excited about it as it was going to represent the experiences and solidarity of different supporter groups during the uprising. But it was very disappointing, it did not represent anything, it did not have any political insight. In the Q&A, people asked the directors ‘how can you make a film like this?’ People are very keen on watching something about Gezi like *İtirazım Var* (Onur Ünlü, 2014) or *Love Will Change the Earth* (Reyan Tuvi, 2014). Gezi became an iconography in one year and people even started to romanticise it, I hope it does not go further.

What this indicates is that my informants increasingly felt marginalised from the bourgeois public spheres, and intended to criticize the issues that might contaminate the authenticity of their own increasingly ‘marginalised’ experiences. They feared that their counter-public sphere would eventually become a ‘contaminated’ bourgeois public sphere. They protested the problematic representations of the Gezi uprising in the films and felt strongly opposed to the romanticisation of Gezi, which in their eyes damaged the authenticity of their counter-public spheres and could prevent further political mobilisation. Given the fragmented nature of contemporary social movements, my informants presented heterogeneous layers of perceptions and practices of what their cultural counter-sphere and the Gezi uprising implied for their own self-creation and identities.

Thus, this community’s politicisation also meant that they questioned the authenticity of their own counter-public sphere. In this regard, the consumption as part of social movements can also become a part of the logic of the market. In a parallel fashion, a recent article by Yalkın and Koçer (2015), on the Gezi uprising claims:

Gezi was neither market-bound nor purely liberating in essence and that it was essentially an intertopian space. The romanticisation of resistance was one of the hallmarks of the uprising. Taking place both during and after the resistance itself, this attitude toward the movement has been manifested through hashtags such as *geziyi unutma* (don’t forget gezi) and *geziyi hatırlat* (remember gezi) even several weeks after the closing of the park, through social media posts that collectively romanticized the movement through conversation and face-to-face recounting of the

events. Gezi Park and its spirit were not and could not be free of market relationships because there were still vendors that sold a variety of items ranging from foodstuffs such as popcorn, meatballs, watermelon, water, tea, and beer to other items such as tissues and toilet paper. Although these exchanges did not de-legitimize the helpful and 'one for all, all for one' discourse, the market system was not wiped out completely or even temporarily (Yalkın & Koçer, 2015: 3).

In this perspective, it is almost impossible that some social movements would be free from the market system. I agree with them in their approach to the Gezi as a romanticised uprising that was free from market relations. As my ethnographic data also shows, the underlying logic and motivation of activism should not be romanticised as they are built on the complex social, cultural and political network of relations and are not exempt from power relations and/or the principles of market economy.

In this section, I have discussed the IIFF as a counter-public sphere to the dominant public sphere in Turkey by making use of the concept of public sphere, which was coined by Habermas in 1962, in order to understand European society from the early sixteenth century. Later scholars like Negt, Kluge and Labanyi (1988), Wimmer (2005) and Fenton and Downey (2003) built on Habermas' concept of the bourgeois public sphere and discussed the viability of counter-public spheres such as a proletarian public sphere. In addition, I pointed to alternative uses of the concept of public sphere in non-Western societies. In this section, I pointed to the main attributes of counter-public sphere at a time of crisis and instability of the dominant public sphere around the time of the Gezi uprising. My aim was to show that audiences can use film festivals as counter-public spheres in the context of the increasing violence of the dominant/bourgeois public spheres like state institutions. In this context, the cultural spaces start to function also as political spaces, thus the festival community used the film festival space in order to go beyond the official discussion, in order to protect their own 'marginalised' identities and engage in discussions about what to do for the future.

This section also introduced the concept of citizenship and its implications within the context in Turkey in order to shed light on the ways in which this community's understanding of citizenship changed. This audience

community used this sphere for their discussions and emotions at a radically transforming time period, but they also questioned its 'authenticity'. However, in questioning its authenticity, this community insisted on the authenticity of their own experiences, as it was the case with their perception of the authenticity of what they perceive to be the counter-public sphere of Gezi, which is imagined, just as it was in the case of Habermas' notion of the bourgeoisie public sphere, when he first coined the term.

5.4.The Activist Cosmopolitan Identity of the IFF Audiences

Within the framework of the transnational social spaces of film festivals, which merges with various social movements, especially in global cities such as Istanbul, film festivals tend to prompt cosmopolitan identities. This audience community started to embrace cosmopolitan identities through their exposure to different representations in the festival films and their engagement with Istanbul as an increasingly cosmopolitan city. In this section, I define the notion of activist cosmopolitanism, which does not represent a general tendency in the studies of cosmopolitanism. Following Kaplan (2008: 21), I point out that witnessing a growing chaos in Turkey and the world, both via the films at the festival and the cultural and political events, leads to 'a broader understanding of what has been done to the victims of the possibility of the trauma produced by humans, which can lead to productive activism' (Mousoutzanis, 2015: 267). Rather than an empty empathy, this audience community started to see the suffering of vulnerable others, which functioned as a mirror for their own understanding of themselves and as communities. The main reason behind this audience community's activist cosmopolitanism was their participation in a cultural counter-public sphere in which they engaged with critical discussions, expressed their emotions and took their own decisions over what to do about their movie theatres and other spaces. Similar to the ways in which the media has a vital role in nurturing cosmopolitan openness within every day rituals and

practices (Yılmaz & Trandafoiu, 2015: 4-5), film festivals can help its attendees to develop a cosmopolitan outlook by the mobilities they offer.

Following Calhoun (2002), I want to suggest that the accounts of cosmopolitanism problematise its acceptance of modernising imaginaries without giving adequate attention to the formation of solidarity and the conditions that enable collective choices about the nature of society. Calhoun suggested that the public sphere can be conceptualized not simply as a setting for rational debate and decision making - thus largely disregarding or transcending issues of identity - but as a setting for the development of social solidarity as a matter of choice, rather than necessity (Calhoun, 2002: 148). Cosmopolitanism, in this framework, does not 'necessarily' imply or lead to networks of solidarity, but cosmopolitan sensibilities and identities have the potential to prompt social as well as political solidarity.

Similarly, Chouliaraki (2013) also maintains that the cosmopolitanisation of the public sphere can be enhanced by challenging Habermas' rationalist orientation, with an account of the moral-aesthetic pressures that human vulnerability places upon the public sphere. Thus, cosmopolitanism does not come about only through the force of the best argument but also through the symbolic recognition of vulnerable others, as well as through the cultivation of our imaginative capacity to engage with the 'otherness' of their vulnerability (Chouliaraki, 2013: 112). The film festival as a cultural counter-public sphere paves the way for the recognition of others' vulnerability through the increasing number of films and panels on Kurdish, Syrian and LGBTI communities, which went against the dominant ideology in Turkey that dismisses and marginalizes these identities. Also, the interaction with different groups and being exposed to alternative views and cultures initiated a cosmopolitan identity and cosmopolitanism which in turn set the ground for political action. Building on Calhoun's and Chouliaraki's discussions of the relationship between cosmopolitanism and public sphere, I want to suggest that the expression of discussions and emotions in counter-public spheres can lead to activist cosmopolitan identities.

The revival of cosmopolitan thought today has much to do with the tremendous changes that occurred in the 1990s in the aftermath of the fall of communism in the USSR and Central and Eastern Europe. The 1990s were also marked by the arrival of the Internet and the epochal revolution in communication technologies, which led not only to the transformation of everyday life and politics but of capitalism too (Delanty, 2012: 3). Delanty (2012) describes the new millennium as a period of both cosmopolitan and anti-cosmopolitan movements colliding. Today, many people are reluctant to and even resent the disintegration of national and other collective identities and try desperately to restore closure and cultural purity, such as the anti-immigration movements and anti-refugee protests across Europe. However, at the other end of the spectrum, people's identities increasingly transform into cosmopolitan identities, becoming more open to diversity as 'identity is subject to the play of history, politics, representation and difference' (Hall, 1992: 309). In this picture, there is a bipolarisation of culture; while more and more people embrace global identities, others, in a way, panic about these groundbreaking changes.

From 11 September 2001 on, with the emergence of the 'war on terror' to the global crisis of capitalism that began on 14 September 2008, anti-cosmopolitan tendencies have flourished all around the world. Nowadays, closing of the European borders to war refugees reshapes the world according to new doctrines of security and capitalist crisis. In Turkey, the rise of political Islamist movements partly derives from the rise of Islamist ideologies after 9/11, as a response to the neo-colonial attacks in Iraq and Afghanistan, which means they are part of a global issue. Additionally, we can talk about an increase in the nationalist tendencies and movements such as the Republic Protests in Turkey (2007), filled with slogans like 'one nation, one flag' or the recent attacks on the pro-Kurdish party, HDP (2015). Nevertheless, the small social movements in Turkey and the ongoing information flows of various other social movements across state boundaries initiated an activist cosmopolitanism and a cosmopolitanism from below, which are the main reasons behind the launching of the Emek movement, as well as the Gezi uprising.

The significance of studying cosmopolitanism is that the discussions on cosmopolitanism challenge the foundations of traditional, nation-state-centred social and urban research (Hannerz, 1990; Appiah, 2006; Delanty, 2006). The migration streams and trans-border movements of people and cultural goods blur cultural lines and make national cultures more complex (Perkins & Thorns, 2012: 40). One of the results of the trans-border movements of people can be cosmopolitanism, which roughly means reaching across cultural differences through dialogue, aesthetic enjoyment and respect (Hannerz, 1992, 1996; Werbner 2008). For Beck (2000), as cited by Raco, Imrie, and Lin (2011), this process leads to 'disembedded individualisation', in which individuals increasingly change their identities, and identify less with the national scale and more with other forms of lifestyle-based, local and global identities (Raco, Imrie, and Lin, 2011: 277). In this context, cosmopolitan people embrace global identities, which are generally not in harmony with the official national histories of their nation states.

However, cosmopolitanism is more than going against the nation state's ideologies and histories. As an example of this, Calhoun (2003) describes consumerist cosmopolitanism as manifested in the globalisation of tastes, the massive transfer of food-stuffs, artworks, music, literature and fashion. These processes represent a multi-culturalisation of society but also point to the advanced globalisation of capitalism (Vertovec & Kohen: 2002: 14). As much as cosmopolitanism is related to the loss of nation state ideologies in the age of globalisation, it is closely tied to global capitalism because of promoting an aesthetic taste and implying consumer culture. Vertovec and Cohen (2002: 7) describe the notion of aesthetic cosmopolitanism, which emphasises that it is not only elites but also tourists of all kinds that have developed more cosmopolitan or far-reaching aesthetic tastes. In this respect, it is necessary to draw attention to two different types of cosmopolitanism, 'cosmopolitanism from above', which is related to global capitalism and mainly exists in the form of not only international organisations, partnerships and cooperative agreements between states, but also in the form of aesthetic enjoyment and taste, and 'cosmopolitanism from below', which today mainly springs out through the activities of new transnational social movements (Pieterse, 2006: 1253-1254).

To illustrate, cosmopolitanism from below can be in the form of working-class cosmopolitanism (Werbner, 1999; Lamont & Aksartova, 2002), vernacular cosmopolitanisms (Diouf 2000; Pollock 2000; Werbner 2006a; Werbner 2006b), and activist cosmopolitanism (Guneratne, 2008; Ram, 2008).

In the almost absence of research on film festivals' affinity with cosmopolitanism, I took inspiration from research on cosmopolitanism's relationship with other festivals, such as music and/or arts festivals. In the existing literature, several scholarly research outputs focus on the role that festivals play to make cities more vibrant and cosmopolitan (McClinchey, 2008; Waitt, 2008; Van Melik & Van Aalst, 2012; Krüger: 2015). As an example of this, Muir (1997) remarked on the importance of public festivals in consolidating civic identities in the 12th to 18th century Europe, particularly for independent city-states, such as Venice (Waitt, 2008: 513). In different eras of history, festivals consolidated more civic and democratised identities, as is the case in the present day. In her research on the urban ethnic festivals of today, McClinchey (2008: 259) shows that festivals have an impact on a community's social identity by the way culture is represented. The particular ways of representation of culture in the festival space transforms the individual and collective identities of people. In other research by Lee, Arcodia and Lee (2012: 334-335), multicultural festivals are shown to build multicultural societies and are discussed as contributing to social harmony and social integration, particularly in countries experiencing significant shifts in ethnic composition, such as South Korea. The cultural space of film festivals creates links between groups with different ethnic and cultural backgrounds and sexual orientations. Festivals are also discussed as a response to cultural dislocation brought about by growing numbers of diasporic communities (Nurse, 1999; Quinn, 2005). As cosmopolitanism is commonly related to diaspora, film festivals with cosmopolitan potentials also tend to bring together diasporic groups and/or represent their cultures.

Istanbul has not been known for its free cosmopolitan communities and spaces, especially for minorities such as the Greeks, Jews or Armenians (Navaro-Yaşin, 2002; Werbner, 2015). Riots against the non-muslim population

have been an issue in Istanbul after a Turkified nation was founded in 1923, for example, the 6-7th September Istanbul Pogrom²⁶ against the Greek populace in 1955. This attitude continued throughout the history of the Turkish Republic, directed at the non-Muslims, non-Turks and non-Sunnis such as the Kurds and the Alawites. However, there is room for transformation through social movements and the increasing availability of transnational spaces in Istanbul. Although 'the strong state tradition' in Turkey still persists and consolidates its power through the AKP government, due to the increasing transnational social spaces, new media, immigration and travelling, people from different backgrounds began to have activist cosmopolitan identities. In fact, even if nationalism and Islamism are still hazardous problems in Turkey, the numbers of those who realise the existence of these problems and take political action have also increased.

One of the most vital issues here is the analysis of how all of that has occurred currently, a world in turmoil and accordingly a Turkey in turmoil, influences the identities and practices of people, in this case the practices of a particular film festival audience. The experience of 'going beyond the familiar' through the increasing transnational spaces in Istanbul can be interpreted as going beyond the local, intermingling with the global context. In her research on food blogs, Trandafoiu (2015: 31) points out that food blogs display attitudes that show concern for others and a desire to provide a service, open mindedness (the acceptance of otherness and difference) and a desire to travel or explore. Similar to Trandafoiu's discussion on food blogs, film festival spaces entail democratisation of tastes and open-mindedness, in addition to creating a desire to explore. For instance, Hikmet's viewpoints became more open through the representations of the festival films:

I learn loads of things from the representation in these films. They break my resistance about certain issues. They educate you even when you are not aware. For example, if you watch these kinds of films, you do not

²⁶ Also known as 'The Events of September', the Istanbul Pogrom was organised mob attacks directed at Istanbul's Greek minority.

feel tense when two men kiss each other, even as a youngster. By showing you 'unfamiliar worlds', the films shown at film festivals help you construct a 'cultural archive'. You get to know many other cultures and lifestyles through the represented worlds in the films. You learn about a transition in Taiwan for instance, even if it is a country far away from where you are.

Hikmet pointed out an opposition between his previous identity and the current one. After he was exposed to festival films, his inner homophobia dissolved and he learned about the cultures and transitions that he had not even thought about. He owes this new identity, which is almost in opposition to his previous identity, to the film festival atmosphere and culture at the IIFF. The films helped him to create a cultural archive for his acceptance of other cultures, different from his previous rather homogeneous understanding of different cultures or gender. The cultural archive here suggests that the memory of different representations through the films gradually creates a cosmopolitan outlook for Hikmet and other members of this audience community.

Similar to Hikmet, Selda (28, a chemical engineer) also chose films from distant cultures:

I choose films from countries that are not in the media, such as China. Even if the representation might not be true, I learn a view from a Chinese person, which makes me want to learn about China more.

The fact that the mainstream media in Turkey do not represent a lot of news stories from distant cultures such as China, made Selda curious about the culture in China. Thus, Selda did not know about 'distant' cultures, but her engagement with the festival meant, as discussed by Waldron (1991), development of the ability to stand outside of one's life written and scripted by any one community, whether that is a faith, tradition, religion or culture, such as Turkishness or Islamist neo-liberalism. Selda started to stand outside of written and scripted cultural codes that are imposed on her by her own community, culture, media and nation state officialdom and the festival space helped her to

achieve this. In the cultural counter-public sphere of the IIFF, she was able to reach a diversity of different views, which would make her establish her own cultural archive.

Zeren (35, a lawyer) realised the similarities of the culture in Turkey to other countries through the films she saw at the film festival:

I learn about different cultures through these films. For instance, in one Israeli film I saw last year, I realised how their culture is similar to ours, which was not my expectation. The wedding represented in the film was so similar to a Turkish wedding, I felt as if it was in Turkey.

Zeren previously had more stereotypical approaches to culture and identities. For instance, she had a binary opposition between Turkish and Israeli cultures in her mind, which transformed due to the life-worlds she was exposed to through the representations in these films. For Bill Nichols (1994: 18), the festival-goer is encouraged to make the strange familiar, to recover difference as similarity. In other words, due to the encounter with the representations of 'different' cultures, a certain level of familiarity with these cultures becomes possible with the help of film festivals. According to Nichols (1994), our participation in this realm qualifies us as citizens of a global, but still far from homogeneous culture. Zeren's participation in this realm made her realise the differences between the cultures as similarities, however, this did not make her understand the Israeli and Turkish cultures as homogeneous.

Perihan's (40, a sales director) practices also changed through the representations in the films:

I believe these films create cultural interaction. For instance, I watched a film that was shot in Colombia. It was a film about the guerrillas' life in the rain forests. After seeing the film, I was moved. I researched the country's history, I was so impressed and I wanted to go there. And eventually I did go there.

Perihan's understanding of cultural interaction and tourism became different from other tourists, who do not genuinely interact with the people or the

cultures. She followed a representation of a Colombian guerrilla on a film that she saw during the festival, which made her travel to Colombia and experience a cultural exchange with the culture there. This is not to say that the tourist *per se* can be described as cosmopolitan by nature. Werbner (1999) argues that the travelling elite by no means have the monopoly on openness to others. On the one hand, privileged globetrotters are not always open to alterity, in spite of their aspirations, because they often stay in their own social 'bubbles'. While international mobility helps produce cities brimming with cultural diversity (Hannerz 2010), the diversity does not in itself create cosmopolitanism as well; rather, the everyday urban spaces of multi-ethnic cities, such as neighbourhood commercial streets, put people who perceive each other as 'Other' into situations where they can interact (Radice, 2014: 11). Early articulations of the concept of cosmopolitanism, such as that of Hannerz (1990: 241), show that mere tourists are not necessarily cosmopolitans, because they look for 'home plus sunshine' or 'home plus servants'; nor were exiles, because they were not travelling by choice and remained too focused on their home country's affairs to be fully open to new milieus (Hannerz 1990: 243–244, Nijman 2007).

On the other hand, those who travel the world from a relatively powerless, subaltern position, such as racialised migrant workers, often also acquire cosmopolitan knowledge and competencies, if only as a survival strategy (Werbner 1999; Radice, 2014). For instance, Notar (2008) shows how cafe owners in the Yunnan province, China, who have never or barely travelled at all, produce cosmopolitanism – in the form of Western-style food and easier inter-cultural exchange – rather than locality for adventurous Western world travellers. The traditional understanding of cosmopolitanism is still a Western-oriented concept, which remains closely associated with the rhetoric of former imperial colonisers or moralising elites (Hall, 2002: 29-30; Mignolo, 2000; Mendieta, 2009). Because of their autonomy in the protests, my informants' quest for agency through political activism and the participative democracy created in the parks, turn their cosmopolitanism into a critical discourse; a cosmopolitanism from below and an activist cosmopolitanism.

This is surely not simply the accomplishment of individual travellers or migrants; it is the development of newly established modes of sociality and creative encounters. Quite often, these take place in megacities, whether in the developing world or in Europe and America (Werbner, 2015: 3). Werbner's (2015: 7) example of Cairo, which has transformed into a cosmopolitan city, shows that 'the explosion of social movement activity in 2005 triggered new kinds of 'cosmopolitan claims-making' and 'a refashioned project of active citizenship'. Similar to the 2005 protests in Cairo, the Gezi uprising in Istanbul in 2013 brought together human rights activists, intellectuals, labour syndicates, journalists, students and women's groups. These different groups redefined social justice on the streets of Istanbul, a megacity, and in doing so, 'claimed a certain kind of cosmopolitan status and transnational agency' (Werbner, 2015: 7), which I describe as an activist cosmopolitanism.

The visibility of the LGBTI and Kurdish identities in 2013 (especially during the uprising) and 2014 and the influence of the Gezi uprising in 2014 were the nexus of the IIFF's cosmopolitan culture and redefined Istanbul as a cosmopolitan city. In 2013 and especially in 2014, the activist cosmopolitanism of this audience community also implied an interest in the Kurdish films at the IIFF. The understanding of the dysfunctionality of the mainstream media during the uprising led to a greater understanding and empathy for the Kurdish struggle of freedom, as it was not represented in the media or was misrepresented. The discussions during the Q&A's of Kurdish films revolved around how to establish a stable/lasting peace and how to prevent other atrocities by the Turkish state. In addition to questions that were about the ways we can build a just, peaceful and heterogeneous society in Turkey and the Middle East, there were also many questions on Kurdish filmmaking such as the difficulties faced in the making of the films, from funding to the intervention of the Turkish state etc. Although Kurdish films did not have their separate section in the programme and some of them were shown as part of the 'National Selection' or they were spread to other parts of the programme, my informants mentioned their satisfaction regarding the increasing numbers and visibility of these films in the programme. While the political situation was transforming in Turkey, which meant a more authoritarian regime for my

informants, the ongoing Kurdish resistance²⁷ and the peace process with the AKP government between 2009 and 2015 was legitimising Kurdish identity in Turkey. Thus, Kurdish identity became more visible at the IIFF in 2013 and 2014. For instance, Gül talked about these films thus:

I go to nearly all Kurdish films at the festival. There are many more films from the Kurdish region compared to the past, which is quite exciting. Their increasing visibility can be tied to the increasing film traditions in the region as well as the transformation of the political atmosphere in the Middle East.

This transformation, as Gül highlighted, points to two different but interrelated phenomena: the increasing visibility of Kurdish culture and identity due to the struggles for more than thirty years and the increasing numbers of Kurdish films from the Kurdistan region²⁸ and from the Kurdish diaspora, which is also partly due to the conditional end of civil war in the Kurdish region of Turkey between 2009 and 2015.²⁹ Within this picture, an activist cosmopolitanism emerged in response to the violence of the state on the Kurdish people. Through the recognition of other's vulnerability (Chouliaraki, 2013), the representation in the

²⁷ From the mid-1920s until the end of the 1980s, the Turkish state 'assumed' that there was no Kurdish element on Turkish territory (Yeğen, 1999: 555). 'The Kurds' early attempts during the 1960s and 1970s to seek a remedy through legitimate channels were suppressed, leading them to seek other avenues. The most vital expression of the Kurdish question in Turkey has been the guerrilla insurgency by the PKK' (Güneş, 2012: 1). The conflict between the Turkish state and the PKK began in 1984, which resulted in the loss of over 100000 people and had major social, political and economic consequences. The solution process between the PKK and the Turkish state started in 2009. However, after the pro-Kurdish party HDP got 13% of votes of the elections on the 7th of June, 2015, the AKP restarted the war in the Kurdish region of Turkey.

²⁸ The Iraqi Kurdistan is the only 'state' of the Kurdish people. However, the Kurdistan region includes the North of Syria, which is called the Rojava, the south-east of Turkey, the west of Iran and the northern Iraq. In these four parts of 'Kurdistan', Kurdish people form the prominent majority of the population.

²⁹ This situation changed after the abolition of the 'Peace/Solution Process' in the summer of 2015.

films and the discussions initiated an understanding of the repression. The growing awareness on the issue relied also on the peace/solution process that was active in Turkey from 2009, which officially ended in 2015, after the AKP lost its power as the ruling party to the pro-Kurdish party HDP passed the election threshold. Hikmet looks at the issue from a different point of view, relating it to the movie theatres in 2013:

Kurdish films were usually screened at the Pera Movie Theatre for years. There was a limit to the number of people who attended Kurdish films. The Pera acts like a cinematheque. When I first opened the catalogue, however, I look at what is on in the Atlas and Beyoğlu, these are the two main cinemas that come to mind when you think about the IIFF. The Pera is like the step-child of the film festival, similar to Kurdish identity in Turkey. The organisers do not take the 'risk' of showing these great films to a mass audience in the Atlas or the Beyoğlu. In the past, Turkish films were also not being shown in them. Only after Turkish cinema started to get bigger towards the end of the 2000s, they started to show Turkish films in the large-format movie theatres like the Atlas and Beyoğlu. And now the same thing can happen for Kurdish films.

In addition to the increasing number of films, Hikmet highlighted the increasing attention of audiences to them, which also changed the exhibition of the Kurdish films. Hikmet related the 'marginality' of Kurdish films and identities to the spaces of the film festival in 2013. Hikmet perceived Kurdish identity to be treated as a 'step-child', not only in the everyday social life in Turkey, but also in the counter-public sphere of the IIFF. Hikmet felt this way possibly due to the IIFF's Kemalist background but in 2014, I watched many Kurdish films in the biggest room of the Atlas movie theatre. This shows that they have an increasing audience of Kurdish films and that the film festival and its audiences were more understanding towards Kurdish culture and identity. In this regard, although the IIFF conformed to its 'Kemalist duties', its attendees still used it as an oppositional sphere to the 'official' history of Turkey and a transformative ground about the changing atmosphere of culture and politics in Turkey and the Middle East.

The increasing awareness and politicisation also changed the IIFF's programme. For years the IIFF has organised human rights and political documentary sections, or sections particularly devoted to Third Cinema³⁰ but the Gezi uprising transformed its programme into a more 'political' one, which also raised more concern over the happenings in the Middle East, particularly in Syria. This meant that it changed direction from the Kemalist understanding of festival organisation, towards the direction of a cosmopolitan space. In 2014, the IIFF introduced a brand new section, entitled 'Nerdesin Aşkım?'³¹ which was named after the common slogan of the LGBTI communities in the Gezi uprising. The LGBTI communities were one of the most prominent and visible communities at the uprising, which created further awareness about their identities and politics. Although LGBTI films have been screened at the IIFF for many years, this year marked the first designated LGBTI section, comprising seven films that sketched the stories of the everyday lives of gay, lesbian and transsexual characters. Many of my informants were fascinated by the name of this section and the films in it. The film festival's curator Azize Tan explains the emergence of this section:

We have been showing a lot of LGBTI films in our programme for many years. But this year we realised the increasing number of these films within our programme. Aesthetically and thematically these films were also talking to each other, so we decided to put them together. Gezi introduced this slogan 'Where are you, my love?' to our lives and the background of this slogan is quite significant too. Because we believe that there is no gender, race or age for love, we created this section dedicated to LGBTI films. It has become a great breakthrough for our programme, both because of the increasing visibility of these groups in

³⁰ Third Cinema refers to the Latin American film movement that began in the 1960s-1970s, but it is not a cinema that is defined by its geography, it is rather defined by its socialist politics (Wayne, 2001: 1). Stam (1990: 253) describes the movement as being independent in production, militant in politics, and experimental in language.

³¹ It means 'Where Are You, My Love?'.

Turkey and their indispensable part and role in the Gezi uprising and also in terms of the increasing number of LGBTI films all around the world today.

The increasing visibility of the LGBTI movement in Turkey and the films from all around the world, created this section and my informants were appreciative of it. Because LGBTI communities were quite active during the uprising, both in the parks and the barricades, the festival changed its programme accordingly. The organisers directly engaged with the culture of protest, and their programming owed to their perception of the 'politicised' audience of the IIFF. This resulted in the transformation of the programme, therefore more visibility of the LGBTI communities after the uprising. Mostly for this reason, Fatma (29, a civil servant) felt a sense of belonging to the film festival in 2014:

This section makes me feel a sense of belonging to the film festival. Being a Middle Eastern woman, I am an 'other' too, I think LGBTI communities are still 'others' in nearly all societies, especially in Islamist countries like Turkey, therefore I feel akin to them. The fact that the festival tries to show their stories more, now in a separate section, makes me feel more at home here.

The visibility of the LGBTI communities through the film festival, now with a designated section, made my informants feel at home and in solidarity with other oppressed and vulnerable groups from all around the world. Fatma's experience was one of universalising empathy: she felt that she understands the LGBTI community's situation because she perceives herself to be in a similar situation. Thus the film festival contributes to an understanding of our shared humanity that crosses the boundaries of identity politics.

This section advanced discussion on the cosmopolitan openness of a particular film festival audience. Their cosmopolitan imagination transformed into a critical and activist cosmopolitanism through their awareness of other people's trauma and vulnerability in their social movements and counter-public sphere of the IIFF. This resulted from the fact that film festivals, especially those

in global cities, merge with various social movements, have the potential to transform into cultural counter-public spheres which implies the exposition to other people's vulnerabilities, and go beyond rational discussions in the context of the public sphere. They not only developed empathy towards distant cultures in Taiwan or Latin America, but their empathy also converged in their openness to the taboo issues within the official history in Turkey. Their politicisation and political action within their public sphere also went against cosmopolitanism from above, which is generally associated with consumption and accordingly global capitalism.

5.5. Conclusions to the Chapter

In this chapter, I have defined the intrinsic qualities of film festivals as social spaces, which can lead to the formation of alternative public spheres. In examining it, a Habermasian (1974) notion of public sphere threw light on an understanding of a film festival community. The notion of public sphere was vital in the sense that citizens confer with the guarantee of freedom to express and publish their opinions within the context of the political public sphere, which mediates between society and state and sets the necessary conditions for democracy since it provokes the critical judgment of a public making use of its own reason. After a discussion of Habermas' concept of public sphere, I engaged with Calhoun's (1992) critique of it since Habermas ignored the 'less rational' characteristics of public life. Following the foundational discussions on public sphere, I employed the concept of counter-public spheres, and defined the IIFF as a cultural counter-public sphere. This sphere works as an emancipatory strategy for individuals and functions as a means to create a public for one's own alternative lifestyle, which might become established because of a crisis of legitimacy and a loss of faith in the established institutions of the public sphere (Wimmer, 2005, Downey & Fenton, 2003). While the bourgeois public sphere is not very pluralistic in Turkey, the cultural public spheres transformed into pluralistic ones and provided a lens of cultural criticism.

The IIFF functioned as a cultural counter-public sphere for this community of film festival audiences and this feature of the film festival enabled the creation of cosmopolitanism from below. In the last part of this section, I advanced discourses on cosmopolitanism and defined a form of cosmopolitanism from below; an activist cosmopolitanism. Through the recognition of others' vulnerability in the cultural counter-public sphere of the IIFF (Chouliaraki, 2013), this community's cosmopolitanism became cosmopolitanism from below. Rather than embracing cosmopolitanism, which implies consumer culture and taste, this audience community became active citizens and regained their civic competence through actively involving themselves in discussions in the festival space, not only on 'distant' cultures such as China, but also on taboo issues in Turkey, such as those related to the Kurdish, Syrian or LGBTI communities. This audience community's cosmopolitanism implied that they formed their own cultural archives of other cultures and lifestyles through the represented worlds in the films. In addition, their cosmopolitan outlook developed because of the intertwinement of the IIFF within the general cosmopolitan change in Istanbul's cityscape in the early 2010s.

Chapter 6

The Anti-Neoliberal Discourses and Feelings of Nostalgia for Spaces at the Festival

6.1.Introduction

Other than creating an activist cosmopolitanism in the counter-public sphere of the IIFF, this film festival community felt nostalgic and embraced anti-capitalist and anti-neoliberal discourses in the face of the penetration of Islamist neo-liberalism. For Harbord (2002: 61), 'film festivals are a particular manifestation of the way that space is produced as practice. They are implicated in the structure, design and the use of cities, are part of the fabric of city life and its annual calendar'. The space is produced as practice in the case of the IIFF, as its spaces did not denote an abstract notion and they were not isolated to people anymore, but they were used, transformed and were processed by people. As these spaces radically changed, as, for example, by being demolished, this audience community started to have nostalgic emotions for their past forms. This audience community embraced reflective nostalgic feelings at the IIFF, not restorative nostalgic emotions, which are concepts both coined by Boym (2001). In reflective nostalgia, nostalgia of a lost past can merge with a protest culture and it does not indicate a conservative perspective of the past, while restorative nostalgia idealises the past.

The backbone of this chapter lies in Sayre and Löwy's (1984) concept of 'romantic anti-capitalism'. In this framework, 'the romantic soul longs ardently to return home and the nostalgia is at the centre of this Romantic anti-capitalist vision. They long for a distant past when the alienations of the present did not exist, which implies a pre-capitalist past. Therefore this nostalgia for the past is closely linked to the criticism of capitalism' (Sayre & Löwy, 1984: 56). This audience community longed for a past where they were not as much alienated from the spaces, their work, tickets or the people around them. In this context, a romantic anti-capitalist feeling unfolds, which puts great emphasis on the idea of 'home'. My informants criticised the neo-liberal symbols of precarious work, commercial culture and commodification at the festival, which is the main discussion in the second section. In the following and last chapter, their neo-liberal discourses on the spaces will be the focus, which constituted their underlying motivation for their small movement for protecting the EMT and

political mobilisation during the uprising. Rather than accepting an alienated relationship with the existing spaces, this community intended to look at the past, in their intention to create a less capitalist future. Therefore, in the context of increasing authoritarianism and neo-liberalism, this chapter points to an anti-capitalist and anti-neoliberal audience behaviour hand in hand with nostalgic feelings of the past.

6.2.The Nostalgia Culture at the IFF

The loss of the EMT and the potential loss of other spaces that defined the urban heritage of Istanbul initiated complex feelings across the dwellers of Istanbul, such as this audience community. This included the creation of a nostalgic sentimentality, which was one of the most visible feelings during my fieldwork. This community felt a form of nostalgia in relation to the lost spaces, which is connected to sensory pleasures, to experience of childhood, to an imagination of a more innocent time, and to a sense of lost collectivity. In his seminal chapter 'Right to the City', Lefebvre (1996: 150) discussed that 'the nostalgia and old humanism' are dead and there is the need to reach out for a new humanism, a new praxis. In Lefebvre's framework, claiming the right to the city cannot be possible with the feelings of nostalgia. While I conceptualise the festival and uprising activism of this community as a version of 'right to the city', which is the main discussion in the following chapter, I do not agree with Lefebvre (1996) that 'claiming right to the city' sprang out of the 'new humanism' that is necessarily devoid of nostalgia. In my case study, the intention to claim the right to the city and anti-capitalist discourses worked hand in hand with the nostalgic feelings of this community.

Nostalgia, as a word, is related to the notions of home and pain. 'The etymological origins of nostalgia come from Greek words *nostos* and *algia*. The former means to return home and the latter implies a painful condition' (Davis, 1977: 1). There are roughly two strands within the theories of nostalgia, which particularly conceptualise its political connotations. In one of these theories,

nostalgia is described as being akin to conservatism. Some of these theories describe nostalgia as conservative in praxis (Bennett, 1996: 5) and some others define it as consistent with the ideological imperatives of conservatism as a political philosophy (Allan, Atkinson & Montgomery, 1995). As another example of this, Gupta and Ferguson (1992) define nostalgia as a reactionary concept in that 'nostalgia's association of place with memory and loss plays directly into the hands of reactionary movements' (Gupta & Ferguson, 1992: 6-7). In this framework, nostalgia is even directly associated with conservative and reactionary movements. Lefebvre (1996) also relates nostalgia with tradition, and describes its affinity with spaces as a wish to return back to the confines of the traditional city. Grainge (1999: 623) discusses that nostalgia commonly represented 'a plea for continuity in times of uncertainty and change; the rhetoric of nostalgia posits a decline and then appeals to a more authentic and politically serviceable golden age'. Grainge's approach equated nostalgia with the feelings of an idealised past, which rests on a myth but wherein the people with nostalgic feelings aimed to conserve this mythic past rather than creating a better future. Similarly, Munro (2006) discussed nostalgia as a positive view of the past regime, based on a holistic evaluation of its faults and merits. In the Russian context, this means returning to the Communist regime, or to a feasible reincarnation of it. In this context, Munro defines nostalgia in its reference to the past, but not to the future (Munro, 2006: 290). I disagree with the above accounts, which associate nostalgia only with the past in so far as the people with nostalgic tendencies embrace the past without any critical reflection of it.

There is also much research on criticising the tendency to connect nostalgia directly to conservatism (Tannock, 1995; Lutz, 2004). As an instance of this, Lutz (2004: 112) claimed that nostalgia 'enables the future' rather than solely longing for the past. As much as it is related to the past and present, nostalgia is a projection from the past to the present and the future. For Pickering and Keightley (2006), nostalgia foregrounds the desire not of returning to the past but of recognising aspects of the past as the basis for renewal and satisfaction in the future. 'Nostalgia can then be seen as not only a search for ontological security in the past, but also as a means of taking one's bearings for the road ahead in the uncertainties of the present. In creating and

sustaining a relationship between past and present, nostalgia unfolds as a critical tool and distinguishes between positive, productive, active uses of the past and those which are sterile, impotent, non-transactional' (Pickering and Keightley, 2006: 937-938). In this framework, nostalgia rests in the past but it does not necessarily imply a hopeless and melancholic feeling towards it but enables the making of the future via dispensing with a sterile and impotent fixation towards the past.

The discussion of nostalgia and its relations to politics revolved around these two poles, however, the two categories of nostalgia, namely restorative and reflective, as cited by Boym (2001) might present an alternative to this dichotomy. 'The restorative nostalgia stresses nostos and tends to reconstruct the lost home, often in line with religious and/or nationalist revivals. Restorative nostalgia is based on truth and tradition; it aims to protect the absolute truth. On the other hand, reflective nostalgia does not follow a single plot as it thrives in nostalgia where the longing itself becomes the focus' (Boym, 2001: xviii). It delays the homecoming and the longing itself becomes the aim. 'Reflective nostalgia does not follow a single plot but explores ways of inhabiting many places at once and imagining different time zones; it loves details, not symbols. At first glance, nostalgia is a longing for place but actually it is a yearning for a different time' (Boym, 2001: xv). The reflective nostalgia inverts the symbols of past into new symbols in order to enable the present and the future.

Furthermore, Boym (2001) does not define nostalgia as an 'individual' feeling but deals with it as an historical emotion. In this context, outbreaks of nostalgia often follow revolutions; the French revolution of 1789, the Russian Revolution or the revolutions in Eastern Europe (Boym, 2001: xvi). Similarly, Davis (1977) also relates nostalgia's eruption to historical events and social change. I expand on Boym's and Davis' discussions to show that nostalgia not only flourishes at times of revolution but also breaks out during radical socio-political transitions, which might or might not lead to revolution and/or regime change.

This is not to say that restorative and reflective nostalgias are necessarily mutually exclusive. They might overlap, as it is hard to separate the restorative or reflective nostalgias from each other in practice. However, the audience community in question did not remain rooted in the past, and even when they sometimes embraced conservative and elitist discourses, this did not mean that they were stuck in the past in the sense that they aimed to conserve the past, together with its problems, many forms of nationalisms or atrocities. From the outset, this audience community might seem to have embraced a restorative nostalgia of the republican past, similarly to the way that they idealised the times when they were able to enjoy large format movie theatres and/or 'film as art', which not only signified a longing for the cinema as an industry, but also a longing for secular ideologies. This audience community longed for the times when there was a big film industry in Turkey, which foregrounds their narratives about the EMT movie theatre. They complained and missed the lost past, even to the point where they attributed mythic connotations to the homeliness of the past spaces and the film industry. However, they did not embrace the symbol of Emek as a 'national' icon that symbolised the Republic of Turkey. In parallel to the name of the movie theatre, Labour (Emek means labour in Turkish), they embraced it as a leftist symbol, as a symbol and reference point for resistance against global capitalism hand in hand with Islamism, even when there is increasing repression on the leftists in Turkey. In this regard, their homecoming did not rest upon a conservative notion of tradition as they did not long for the 'homogenising' or 'Turkifying' aspects of the past regime, which I will clarify in the following two sections of this chapter.

My informants associated the EMT with their past, sometimes childhood and their teens, when they 'owned' these spaces and they did not feel marginalised. The EMT, with its massive room, curtains, coffers and foyer belonged to the times of the Yeşilçam and another era in the history of Turkey. This audience community longed for the times when they were able to use these spaces and make them their own. They remember their past in order to cope with the traumatic destruction of old and historical buildings, which had symbolised a more authentic and independent lifestyle for them. However, the past as articulated here, did not actually exist in the form that they missed it,

because Yeşilçam was a commercial industry. As Smith (2008: 4) highlighted, Yeşilçam relied on private entrepreneurship rather than state support, a model that encouraged a popular film industry to develop that stood in contrast to the art cinema traditions of its European neighbours. In this regard, the Yeşilçam film industry and the previous ownership of the EMT were not as non-commercialised as they were idealised by my informants. Korhan (32, an international office worker at a university) recalled his childhood and his first memories of cinema at the EMT:

I remember so vividly when my mum took me to *Dick Tracey* (Warren Beatty, 1990) at the EMT. I sat on one of the wings on the second floor of the cinema. I remember feeling so small and perishable in it, under the coffers. I feel like the loss of the Emek is the loss of my childhood memories.

The EMT meant another era in the lives of my informants. It reminded my informants of their mythic childhood times, where they felt small vis-à-vis the movie theatre. In this regard, similar to the negative responses to the shopping-mallisation of Istanbul and the festival, my informants distinguished between two different periods for the IIFF; before and after the EMT. This also points to the nostalgia for a sense of reverence for cinema as a space and institution. The loss of the Emek not only symbolised the penetration of global capitalism in Turkey but it also signified a more violent, a more competitive neo-liberal era for my informants, as it was not within their control and was against their will to keep their own spaces and culture. Similarly Ferdi (44, a lawyer) stated:

It is really tragic to lose the EMT. The government and the owners of the project said they were going to move the movie theatre upstairs of the shopping mall but they do not only move the movie theatre, they will also move our childhood memories to somewhere else too. Our memories are going to be other memories when they are moved, it will not be the same. Our past is going to be extinct.

The collective memory of my informants, such as those of Korhan and Ferdi, associated the memories of EMT with a lost past, in which they forfeited their own belongings and lives. This audience community had a sense of ownership

of the previous spaces, now they had lost this ownership. The name of the demolition was referred to as 'moving', which made this audience community even more critical of the situation. This also symbolised changing the regime without openly declaring that the regime was actually changing. The Sunni political Islam's takeover in Turkey has never been uttered directly but it has been happening through a silent cultural and political revolution, which is similar to the process of the 'moving' of the EMT. My informants associated the past form of the EMT with the past regime of Turkey, which was about to become extinct.

The change of venues for the IIFF was perceived critically by the audiences. This community idealised the coffers, old seats, curtains, the foyer inside the EMT and the queues outside it and felt negatively about the addition of a multiplex instead of a large format movie theatre. They regarded that the use of the multiplex went against their understanding of the 'authenticity' of the film festival. Derin (38, an unemployed short film director) felt angry about the new Beyoğlu and the use of the movie theatres in Nişantaşı:

Beyoğlu was a centre of culture but now it is a culture of commerce. This changed the population and culture of Beyoğlu. Now the IIFF went to Nişantaşı apart from Beyoğlu. However, I do not go there because it is a sterile culture and very expensive. Even when I go there, I would never buy anything from there.

Derin regarded this transformation within the framework of the overall change of Beyoğlu and Istanbul, which represented an imagined perception of an authentic Beyoğlu as Beyoğlu has also always been a centre of commerce as well as culture. The film festival's screening in shopping malls, especially in multiplexes in a luxurious neighbourhood, signified a different consumption pattern for my informants, a homogenised, sterile and commercial activity. In the loss of different types of 'offline' exhibition platforms, this community started to feel that the festival culture became inauthentic, thus their reflective nostalgia of the past. They did not idealise the past, but missed the less capitalist times when Beyoğlu was not as commercialised (not as full of global chain stores) as today.

Özgün (45, a medical doctor) went further in saying that even the Frigo or coffee he bought in the foyer of the EMT did not taste the same:

To watch a film at the EMT was another experience. Even though I prefer technological innovations too, I miss the leather seats there. It was another pleasure that is no longer in our lives now. I used to eat Frigo in that movie theatre, have missed that taste. Although I can buy Frigo from other places, it does not taste the same.

In 2013, Özgün attended the movie theatres in shopping malls during the festival time as well as other times, but he was also annoyed about the loss of different exhibition outlets such as the open-air and large format movie theatres, which determined movie-going in Turkey for a long time. Sutton (2008) associates nostalgia with sensory triggers such as smells, visions or tastes. My informants, such as Özgün, associated their feelings of the movie theatres and past festivals with the visions of the columns and coffers, tastes of the ice cream or the touch of the leather of the seats. Özgün, similarly, described Emek's demolition as a loss of happiness because of the loss of these sensory triggers. As I discussed above, the feeling of nostalgia is also related to people's unhappiness about the increasing authoritarianism in Turkey, in which political Islam increasingly threatens the secular spheres, which are not 'contaminated' by global chain stores or shopping mall culture.

While the most important factor to shape the audience behaviour was their engagement with the spaces of the film festival, some other members of this community felt nostalgic about other rituals that defined the past. Ertan (58, a retired civil engineer) also embraced a nostalgic feeling, this time related to the tickets and other rituals at the film festival:

It is against human rights if you cannot choose your own seat. The online system of the Biletix says that you need to conform to my own choices and you have no rights; I give you whatever seat I prefer. It is a robotic thing. I am the one to go to the cinema, how come an automatic system allocates the seats for me?

Ertan sat in the same seat for years, when he was able to buy the tickets in advance from the ticket booths of the large format movie theatres or inside the former building of the IKSŞ, namely the historical Luvr Building in the centre of the İstiklal Street in Beyoğlu. He pointed out an opposition between the past of the IİFF and its present condition, which implied that there is less freedom for the individual to choose. Furthermore, Ertan perceives this change within a context where individual freedoms more generally are curtailed as a result of automatization. Here we also have the opposition between the human and the automaton.

Different segments of this audience were affected differently but in similar ways after the dissolution of these independent spaces, which became emblematic of the AKP's rule. The meeting points of the IİFF audience, which were used to socialise and to come together for participation in discussions, were not there anymore. In addition to the loss of the movie theatres, my informants interpreted the dividing of the big rooms in the remaining large format movie theatres as jeopardising their togetherness. In these small rooms, my informants did not feel a sense of belonging and community, thus their nostalgic feelings emerged. Although 'the sites of civic and political formation are plural and distributed, which implies that civic practices and public culture are shaped in circuits of flow and association that are not reducible to the urban (e.g. books, magazines, television, music, national curricula, transnational associations)' (Amin, 2008: 6), I want to emphasise that public spaces such as squares or parks do retain their traditional role of political expression and participation. After the EMT was demolished, the collectivisation became more difficult for different groups at the IİFF. These groups started to feel increasingly isolated from each other, as the festival dispersed to different parts of Istanbul and to multiplexes. It was not only related to the loss of independent and large format movie theatres, but the remaining Atlas movie theatre has also divided its rooms into two small rooms. My informants read the destruction of large-scale movie theatres as part of a government assault on spaces in which people can gather.

This audience community perceived themselves as increasingly isolated to shopping and domestic contexts, which might impede their transformation into active citizens or create solidarity with other people with similar concerns. Hikmet also missed the feeling of collectivity and argued that it was lost when the Emek was gone:

It was all about that feeling for me, when the Emek was there. It was meaningful to see a film for the first time at the Emek. I loved the feeling of collectivity there. After we lost the Emek and Istanbul radically transformed into something else, that feeling was gone. Now, it is still ok to be at the Atlas, it has a foyer and you do not see expensive shops and commodities around when you enter the building and go out.

The radical change symbolised by the EMT implied a radical break from the past. This audience community perceived watching a film at the EMT as different from watching it at another movie theatre. Hikmet felt nostalgia for the sensory triggers created by his experience of watching a particular film at the EMT. He also connected this to the feeling of collectivity, as it was a shared experience of watching a film in a bigger room. Now in smaller rooms, this audience community felt nostalgia for sharing the film with many more people. Therefore my informants were eager to keep the Atlas for the future, which is one of the two remaining large-scale movie theatres, especially its biggest room, as it signified the potential of coming and acting together, apart from standing as a signifier for a less capitalist period with its foyer and independent shops within the arcade that hosted the Atlas.

It could be pointed out that the above accounts of 'ersatz' nostalgia are much more than simply an escape from the troubling present. On the contrary, it makes more sense when viewed as a retreat from the place where 'true' nostalgia is supposed to spring: the remembered past and, most particularly, that past as 'home'. 'The razing of old districts, the high-rises built in a day, the haphazard, strung-out forays of the metropolis into the countryside: all, apparently, are anathema to nostalgia' (Hillenbrand, 2010; 390). Rather than being 'anathema to nostalgia', the high-rises and the shopping malls built in one

day all across Istanbul invited the feeling of nostalgia in Istanbul, which is associated with the previous spaces that marked Istanbul such as the EMT, AKM building, the Narmanlı Han³², the Camp Armen³³ and many others. These spaces were identified with the history and culture of different religious and ethnic groups and minorities in the history of Turkey. My informants perceived their nostalgia to the past spaces as connected to their childhood and innocent times, which were related to the notion of 'home'. In the next sections, this nostalgia, which connects to their protests, will become clearer from their anti-capitalist and anti-neoliberal discourses.

6.3. Audiences against the Symbols of Neo-Liberalism

In this chapter, I discuss the ways in which this particular community embraced anti-capitalist, anti-neoliberal and Marxist discourses hand in hand with nostalgic feelings against the neo-liberal symbols of the festival. Their nostalgia for the past did not prevent them from also embracing anti-capitalist discourses, which creates a 'reflective nostalgia' culture, as in nostalgia projected into the future. This was because nostalgia, in the romanticist and Marxist perspective of Löwy and Sayre (1984: 57), is an active principle, taking many forms: restlessness, questioning, perpetual becoming, searching and struggle. This ranged from their responses to the feeling of automatization in the multiplexes in shopping malls and the working conditions at the festival, for which I employ

³² The Narmanlı Han was built in 1831 and used as the Russian Embassy until 1880. From 1880 to 1914 it was utilised as the Russian Prison. After this date many prominent intellectuals such as Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar lived in the building. There has been many exhibitions in the building and it also served as the base of one of the most important Armenian media groups in Turkey, called Jamanak. It was closed down for 'renovation' in 2011.

³³ The Camp Armen is the historical Armenian Orphanage situated in Tuzla, which was also used for summer camps of Armenian children. Many orphaned Armenian children, including the assassinated Armenian journalist Hrant Dink, stayed there for decades. It became a symbol of land usurpation by the Turkish state. For many times, the Turkish state tried to usurp it, which started The Camp Armen resistance on the 6th of May, 2015 after the government's intention to demolish it overnight.

the concepts of immaterial labour and emotional labour. This community also embraced anti-neoliberal discourses against the promotion of the Lale Card, which discriminated ordinary audiences from 'privileged audiences'. This audience community was against the increasing commercial mechanisms at the IIFF, which signified more and more penetration of neo-liberalism, such as the sponsorship of a bank or the Biletix (a ticket sales company). They longed for a past where they did not have as many commercial symbols at the IIFF, which alienated them from their 'authentic' engagement with the festival and the people.

Tuncay's (32, unemployed) feelings towards the multiplexes are quite different from his feelings at large format movie theatres in the past:

You cannot even give tips to movie theatre employees in the Nişantaşı City's. It was a very good gesture in the past but now everything is 'automatic' in these multiplexes, like the culture itself. The guy who works at the Beyoğlu movie theatre still smiles and makes jokes, but the people working for the multiplexes are not like that. They are not in any way different from a worker in Burger King or McDonald's and I am sure they do not feel any different.

Tuncay differentiated two distinct eras of the IIFF, the one before the 2010s and the contemporary era. The former represented a slower culture as the effects of global capitalism were less evident, whereas the latter signified an increasingly McDonaldised festival period, as the effects of capitalism were more visible and radical. Tuncay was interested in the impact of economic globalisation on the workers in the movie theatres, which seems to fit into a Marxist understanding of work. During capitalism, people are alienated from social life as well as their labour. Thus, 'the worker becomes all the poorer, the more wealth she produces' because her labour is not free but forced labour (Marx, 2007: 71). In this picture, the worker is external to her own labour so that she produces not for herself but for the market. She is not only alienated from her labour but also from the product of labour because she does not have access to what she creates.

The loss of the tradition of distributing tips to the workers of the movie theatres signified the neo-liberal globalisation and also mechanisation of the festival attendance and the alienation of the attendees and the workers. 'The result and the product of the external relation of the worker to nature and to herself is thus private property' (Marx: 2007: 79). Division of labour is also alienating because each person must have a particular activity throughout their life in order to sustain their livelihood. In other words, it is alienating because as long as 'human being's activity is not voluntarily divided, her own action becomes an alien to her which transforms her to a slave' (Marx & Engels, 1970: 160). Thus people are alienated from themselves, labour, other people and nature. In addition to tips, the new tickets, which were more like receipts, and buying these tickets online from the *Biletix*, implied an alienated festival attendance for most of my informants. In Tuncay's perception, there was an authentic public sphere of the IIFF in the past, which was different from the current homogenising and alienating public sphere, as well as alienating oneself from one's own labour.

Hesmondhalgh (2008: 567) discusses that creative industries today endorse inequality and exploitation, which are the most important characteristics of contemporary neo-liberalism. Lazzarato (1996) defined one of the main labour forces today as immaterial labour, activities which force us to question the classic definitions of work and the workforce because they combine the results of various different types of work skill: intellectual skills, as regards the cultural-informational content; manual skills for the ability to combine creativity, imagination, and technical and manual labour; and entrepreneurial skills in the management of social relations. Lazzarato's account names the various features of immaterial labour as precariousness, hyper-exploitation, mobility, and hierarchy (Lazzarato, 1996: 136-137). Hesmondhalgh and Baker (2008: 103-104), in a similar fashion, focused on the workers of creative sectors, i.e. cultural industries, specifically the media workers in areas such as television, magazine journalism and music. They showed that creative work is 'precarious' and showed the specific ways in which precariousness is registered and negotiated, for instance they accounted for the young workers' handling of 'emotional labour'.

To illustrate this, Loist's research (2011) examined the working conditions in two Hamburg-based queer film festivals. 'The festival workers fit perfectly the model of cultural workers with precarious living conditions. The conditions of workers in this field are described by low pay, project-based temporary employment and a lack of career objectives, benefits or retirement plans. Instead of financial rewards, cultural workers in such working conditions often find other reward strategies such as being able to work for something they believe in' (Loist, 2011: 270). The temporary and low-paid aspect of working conditions often remained invisible at the film festival circuits and research. As an example of this, when I worked as an artist guide at the IKS's festivals, the reward I received was mostly social, intellectual and 'emotional', rather than economic. I worked overtime and in return, events associated with the festivals were free to me. I worked hard to make ends meet and received little amounts of money, but I was able to go to the concerts or the films for free. In this respect, the precariousness was offset by the so-called intellectual and emotional 'rewards'.

Similar to Tuncay's relationship with the workers of multiplexes during the festival, the IFF's own workers had an alienated relationship with their work and the festival, which showed the ways the festival endorsed inequality as a principle. Yücesan-Özdemir (2012) shows that the AKP's rule needs to be analysed with reference to the concept of precarious work as a framework defining the new conditions of the labour market, which led to the rise of an informal workforce, the rise of a service sector in the sectorial distribution of employment and the decline in union membership. The structural adjustment plans introduced by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank, hand in hand with domestic demands for the stabilisation of the workforce and costs, had an impact on the AKP social policy, privileging flexible employment. In 1990, the share of the informal employment in total employment was 44 percent, whereas the same ratio is 55.5 percent in 2008. This means that more than half of the total workforce lacks the stability of formal employment (Boyras & Turan, 2013: 188).

One of my informants, Aylin, a subtitle translator of the film festival, pointed out the precarious and hierarchical aspects of being a worker of the

IIFF. Her working conditions were not as secure as ‘the office workers’ of the IIFF. While the conditions of the office workers of the IKSŞ might also not be too secure, the conditions of those who work on a temporary basis in the ‘field’, such as the subtitle translators, artist guides or volunteers, were much less secure. Aylin (36) said that their working conditions worsened after the Akbank³⁴ became the main sponsor, which is the same year the EMT was closed down:

When the Akbank became the main sponsor, we were lucky when we got our salary after two or three months. The IIFF started to pay us late after the closing down of the EMT. As the subtitle group, we had to boycott the festival in 2010, because we did not get a pay-rise. We boycotted the film festival for a year in 2010. In that year, they had to rely on amateur translators instead of us. When we fought for our right through the boycotting of the festival, we won our right back the following year in 2011. The increasing problems with occupational safety and health happened at the same time with the radical penetration of global capital.

Aylin provided a contrast between the times before and after 2010. After 2010, specifically in 2011, the AKP consolidated its power and hegemony, which increasingly changed the political economy of the manner in which Istanbul was structured. The opposition here between the period before and after 2010 lies in the IIFF’s cultural as well as economic transformation. Since 2010, corruption, arbitrariness and lawfulness have become the norms via which Turkish society has been organised, even more so compared to the past. This impacted on the ways the IIFF was organised too; it first changed/reflected on the conditions of the freelance workers. The translators’ boycott of the festival in the same year of the commencing of the Emek movement points to not only the increasing impact of neo-liberalism but also the growth of protest culture within the festival network as well as in Istanbul. Aylin’s reaction to the working conditions also

³⁴ Akbank was founded as a privately-owned commercial bank in 1948. Floated to the public in 1990, Akbank shares began trading on international markets and as an American Depositary Receipt after its secondary public offering in 1998.

represented an anti-capitalist and Marxist approach to labour. The working conditions, in this line of thought, should not be based on flexible contracts and working hours, so that the workers could provide themselves with the basic needs for their livelihood and which do not alienate them from their selves, from their labour and from the product of their labour.

Parallel to Aylin's experience, Devrim related the issue to the new building of the IKSŞ in Şiřhane, which is one of the newly regenerated neighbourhoods of the Beyođlu district. The IKSŞ moved to a bigger and very expensive building in the regenerated district in January 2010. Devrim stated:

Rather than paying a lot of money for that building, they should have given their translators the money they deserved. Is the building more important than their workers? It seems so.

Aylin's and Devrim's experiences show that the gentrification and the neo-liberalisation of the culture and economy in Istanbul were perceived to transform the film culture and resulted in an activist atmosphere. In this perspective, the IKSŞ also operated like a private company even if it is a foundation, because it privileged its own comfort and wellbeing as an institution rather than the wellbeing and rights of its workers, especially the ones with temporary contracts. Devrim highlighted a contrast between the rights and wellbeing of the workers and the rights and wellbeing of the institutions, which is again symbolised by a building. In Devrim's perception, the rights of their workers were not the priority of the IKSŞ, the priority was their own power and integrity, which would be reflected via a regenerated building. Devrim perceived this as being in line with the increased focus on capitalist strategies where workers' rights were increasingly jeopardised.

In addition to working conditions, this community was critical of other 'neo-liberal' symbols in the film festival, such as inequality and gentrification through access cards, working with corporate ticket sales and distribution companies and a bank's main sponsorship. Similar to other international film festivals, the IIFF has a relationship with power and stakeholders, such as the main sponsor of the Akbank from 2004 on. In addition, my informants also

raised the underlying discriminatory politics of the Lale Card and they felt negative about the fact that the IKSŞ acknowledged the members of the AKP government on the festival's catalogue. McGuigan (2005) draws attention to the increasing corporate sponsorship of culture that was funded by public subsidy, an emphasis on running the public sector like private businesses, changing the rationale for culture policy from culture towards the economic and social goals such as competitiveness and regeneration (McGuigan, 2005: 238). In times when neo-liberalism is at its peak, corporate sponsorship and the logic of competitiveness have also become the foci of cultural and creative sectors. This audience community recognised this and saw this as one of the bases of their politicisation, both in the context of the festival and the uprising.

On the IKSŞ's website, the Lale Card membership programme, which has been initiated by the IKSŞ since 2002, is described as 'a programme to gather up its members that are in four different categories, which gives them privileges and priorities. As a member, you can support culture and art and benefit from discounts, priorities and instalment payments' (Istanbul Foundation for Culture and Arts, 2010). It is important to note here that 2002 also marks the very beginning of 'radical' urban regeneration and gentrification of Istanbul's cityscape; in this regard, these processes are intertwined. In their own promotion of the card, it is stated that 'the Lale Card owners can benefit from many social priorities and privileges and that their status becomes different from other ordinary attendees'. In his research on the Fez Festival in Morocco, Belghazi (2006) argues that the organisers of the festival employ exclusive strategies such as the hierarchical organisation of festival sites; some being unaffordable while some others are free to the public, which distinguish between various categories of the audience. Moreover, 'the various events proposed in the festival fix the spectator in more or less one location; draw up a barrier between the performers and the audience; and repeat the social division between categories of audience by demarcating the invited officials and the expensive ticket payers from the rest' (Belghazi, 2006: 105). Festivals have the potential to create a hierarchical and elitist atmosphere, such as the unaffordable events or expensive tickets.

Through the Lale Card, the IKSŞ differentiated its attendees by identifying five different types of attendees: the owners of blue, yellow, red, white and black Lale Cards. All of these cards provided the members with different privileges. To put it differently, the more expensive cards enabled more freedom at the film festival and easier access to films. The shared characteristic of these cards is that the holders were able to buy the tickets before everybody else could. The majority of my informants considered the Lale Card as gentrifying the film festival scene and differentiating the upper-class attendees from 'regular' attendees of the festival. During 2013 and 2014, 16 out of 62 of my informants had the Lale Card. Some of my informants used it as a means to support the festival financially, which represented an alternative or counter-public sphere for them, while some others used it for solidarity with other attendees.

Some of my informants were critical of the IKSŞ's promotion of the *Lale* Card because it went against their understanding of solidarity and sharing. Their perspective also represented an anti-capitalist perspective. They thought that the card privileged a certain segment of the audience, which, for them, represented a rather 'richer' or 'dominant' group within the network of film festival audiences. Niran (34, a drummer) said:

After the *Lale* Card was added to the film festival, its status has changed for me. It has become a place that only some people can access.

Niran differentiated two historical periods of the festival, which is the period before the Lale Card's inception and its aftermath. In this vein, it is a more hierarchical festival now in which people with the Lale Cards can possess a higher status. The Lale Card became a marker for the economic class of the festival attendees, it discriminated the socioeconomic classes of the fellow audience members, which was perceived by this audience community as a way of creating class distinctions between audiences.

Gül (30, a sociologist) connected her negative feelings of the Lale Card with sponsors. She remarked:

I dislike sponsors and I wish there was a way to do these things invisibly. If the IKSŞ cannot do this alone with the incomes of the ticket sales, I totally understand that they take sponsors; it is fine. But the IKSŞ itself also sometimes acts like a corporate sponsor, they constantly open their own tables in the movie theatres in order to sell the Lale Card.

G l did not want to ‘see’ marketisation techniques present at the film festival and does not support the transformation of the IKSŞ into a corporate sponsor, because it was supposed to promote ‘art’ not ‘business’. G l’s point of view implied an anti-neoliberal attitude; a critical attitude against the neo-liberalisation of film culture, exhibition and film festivals. Cemal (36, an academic) not only criticised the Lale Card and the sponsors, but also the fact that the film festival has started to work with the Biletix, which is the counterpart of Ticketmaster in Turkey. He said:

It used to be easy to have access to tickets. There were rituals of buying them from the foyers of the movie theatres or inside the building of the IKSŞ. Because the IIFF cooperates with the Biletix now, it has turned into a craze. On the one hand, the tickets are more expensive because of the service fees of the Biletix, on the other hand people fill all the seats even from the first day. Before you get to study the catalogue, the tickets are sold out.

Cemal pointed to the increasing prices for tickets recently, which also added to the ‘gentrified’ atmosphere at the IIFF. The majority of my informants, like Cemal, felt negative towards the Lale Card, mostly because the tickets of Turkish films sold out very fast as part of the film festival. Turkish films are usually screened only once at the IIFF, in order not to impede their gross from the general release (as I learnt from Azize Tan). The people who had the cards mainly filled the seats in the screenings of Turkish films before everybody else. In general, a fair proportion of my informants could not find tickets on time (especially for films from Turkey) because of the privilege given to the Lale Card holders. They also thought that they were the ‘step-children’ of the film festival because of not holding the Lale Card. Additionally, Cemal’s concern was about the loss of the previous rituals of attending the IIFF, due to the increasing profit-

driven strategies. He nostalgically missed the past where things revolved more around the rituals, whereas now most of these rituals were lost because consumption had been made easier via online facilities. However, this imagined past did not really exist as the IIFF has always been a commercial area, similar to Turkish cinema.

However, this is not to say that the Lale Card was not popular amongst the IIFF audiences, even amongst this particular community. Another proportion of my informants had or was planning to have the Lale Card; 16 out of 62 of my informants had it at the time of my fieldwork (one must bear in mind that three of my informants worked for the festival and five of my informants had press and industry access cards, so that they did not need the Lale Card). Because my informants thought that the film festival was a space that they needed to protect/keep against the increasing Islamist neo-liberalisation of culture and it was a school for constructing their identity, the 16 of them did not give attention to whether the festival was differentiating them from other attendees or creating a gentrified space through it. The commercial mechanisms that are symbols of neo-liberalism, such as the Lale Card access card, also became sites of struggle and solidarity against the neo-liberal ideologies based on the ways in which some of my informants engaged with them. Some of these 16 used the Lale Card in a way to establish networks of solidarity with other members of this community.

In my fieldwork, I came across the practices of the Lale Card holders in the queues, where they helped each other, established relationships and maintained a social network. As an example of this, my informants with a Lale Card underlined that they were using it with and for other people, like my informant Ferdi (45, a lawyer), who held the most expensive and prestigious card amongst all of the Lale Cards. Only a few people held the Black Lale Card, whose names were mentioned and acknowledged in some of the press releases of the festival. Ferdi said that he kept the card for the sake of the film festival's future, in order to support it. For him, creative institutions such as the IKSŞ still serve as oppositional spheres to the AKP's hegemony (even at an institutional level). Similar to other communities, groups or institutions outside of

the AKP's network, the problems at the IIFF network are negotiated and resolved on a DIY basis by its own users. Ferdi added:

The thing I love about this card is that I can buy tickets before they are released and I share my tickets with other people. Last year, I shared it with my secretary's daughter. She is a high school student and she saw some films at the festival and loved them. I also have some volunteers in my workplace and share my event invitations and film tickets with them. There is not one single ticket or invitation sent to me that I do not use. When I am not going, I always distribute them to make other people share this experience.

This suggests that Ferdi used the Lale Card as a social networking tool. In Ferdi's perception, the use of the card implied a network of solidarity and sharing. Through especially Ferdi's practice of using the card, I realised that the cardholders also tend to share it with people and aimed to support the IIFF and the IKSÜ, as the IKSÜ was 'a non-profit culture and arts institution'. As Ferdi's experience showed, even when there is much criticism of the film festival's own gentrification for obvious reasons, the activist aspect of the film festival culture at the IIFF was still prevalent. It could also be examined as a new form as philanthropism, because Ferdi devoted part of his wealth to socially useful purposes. However, it was a bit more complex than a straightforward experience of solidarity and sharing – because it also relied on and in part emphasized class distinctions. The power relations embedded in the relationship of privileged audiences with other non-privileged 'ordinary' attendees is important to note, which would need further research on the cultural economy of festival attendance. For Bourdieu (1985: 724), the position of a given agent within the social space can be defined by the positions he/she occupies in the different fields, that is, in the distribution of the powers that are active within each of them. These are, principally, economic capital (in its different kinds), cultural capital and social capital, as well as symbolic capital, commonly called prestige and reputation.

Similar to the IKSÜ's position, Ferdi's activism is quite enmeshed within his relationship to cultural and social capital and the fact that having and

sharing this card increases his symbolic capital of prestige. This brings us to the issue of imagined solidarity, which shows the presence of heterogeneity of experiences, discourses even across small communities. The activism that sprang out here relies on cultural and economic capital. As discussed by Trandafoiu and Yilmaz (2015: 6), cosmopolitanism and the resulting imagined solidarities are closely related to the discourses of class and consumerism, since a cosmopolitan outlook and solidarity are not equally available to everyone, nor equally empowering. Although Ferdi shares his tickets and card with other members of this community, which is a sign of solidarity, his class background and consumption habits show that the 'shared' cards or tickets cannot guarantee an equal participation for different members of this community in the IFF scene.

Film festivals, in this respect, are 'hybrid affairs that combine culture and economics; they bring in economic goals of stakeholders, as well as non-economic ones such as belonging and community' (Gibson, Waitt & Walmsley, 2009: 12). On the one hand audiences form their communities and practice solidarity within the space of the festivals. On the other hand festivals are profitable businesses which operate with the logic of neo-liberalism, such as their cooperation with multiplexes and ticket sales and distribution companies, which has an impact on the identities of this audience community and their festival going practices. However, this does not mean that these networks of solidarity are exempt from hierarchical and unequal organisation of labour or the discrimination between audiences, which does not go against the logic of DIY networks of solidarity within these circuits. These inequalities or distinctions can unfold in people's relationship with each other and their ways of solidarity such as 'the distinction' created via sharing the most expensive Lale card. Overall, this section has examined the general anti-neoliberal discourses in this community's behaviours.

6.4. Audiences against the Neo-Liberal Festival Spaces

The relationship of this audience community with the spaces constituted their most important engagement with the festival, not only the festival as a geographical and cinematic space but also the festival as a social and political space. Their nostalgia, hand in hand with anti-capitalist and neo-liberal dispositions, revolved around other symbols of neo-liberalism such as the sponsorship of banks and/or the commercial cards, but the spaces stood out as the most prominent. Ooi and Pedersen (2010: 320) discussed that festivals give the city a 'film identity', for example Salt Lake City, due to its hosting of the Sundance Film Festival, is known as the city of the independent film festival'. As Istanbul has long been a 'cinematic city' (Brunsdon, 2012) with various film industries, traditions and exhibition outlets, its film identity has changed in the 2000s, due to the emergence of an international cinema in Turkey and the increasing numbers and impact of film festivals. Van Aalst and Van Melik (2011: 196) describe festivals' capacity to transform an urban place for a short period of time into a 'festival space'. The 'festival space' in Beyoğlu not only comprised mainly of independent movie theatres but also independent cafes, bars and bookshops and all of these spaces in and around the IIFF constituted the foci of this community's engagement with and participation in the film festival. Festivals also reorganise urban spaces as festival spaces, constructing informal discursive arenas (Willems-Braun, 1994) in which people can perform their identities, discuss and share their thoughts.

In this framework, this audience community were against the neo-liberalisation of spaces and the transformation of Istanbul's film identity in accordance with it. The connection of my informants to the spaces of the festival stemmed from their desire to keep these spaces as they are in the face of the increasing intervention of the Islamist neo-liberal strategies and ideologies, which also created a nostalgic attachment to the past form of the festival spaces. Mapped and experiential spaces work together to construct a newer relationship that helps embed market discipline, corporate profit and labour into space, creating the actually existing neoliberal space (Tudor, 2009: 839). Neo-liberal spaces are also organised through the logic of surveillance and security. Festival spaces in Istanbul are increasingly neo-liberalised, which

can be discerned through the increasing presence of security personnel, the consumer goods within the movie theatres, the price and the ways tickets are sold and the working conditions of the workers. Anti-neoliberal collective identities in relation to spaces implied that my informants had concerns for the re-socialisation of space and the protection of public spaces against privatisation (Munro & Jordan, 2013). This audience community found creative ways to show their attachment to the places of the IIFF and they organised many events to honour/protect these spaces. In this context, the use of the Nişantaşı City's movie theatre drew a negative response from the film festival community in question because they were used to engage with the independent and large format movie theatres, especially as part of the film festival. They connected this to the general transformation of Beyoğlu and the demise of traditional movie theatres around the world.

Turkey's first shopping mall, Galleria, opened in Istanbul in 1988 (Gökarıksel, 2012: 7). Slowly, the arcades, independent shops, cinemas, theatres and parks were replaced by shopping malls in the 1990s, not only on the peripheries of Istanbul, but also right at the centre, which signify a more radical transformation compared to conventional global cities like New York or London. Corporate globalisation, hand in hand with Islamist politics, stream-rolled the historical landscape of Istanbul, starting from as early as the 1980s. However, the most radical effects of corporate globalisation were seen in the Beyoğlu district in the 2000s. The difference from the previous periods is that in the 2000s Istanbul had been restructured to become a world capital, which included its own globalisation as an Islamic city. In 2011, Istanbul was the European capital of culture, which accelerated its regeneration process. Azize Tan talked about the shifting every day culture in Istanbul in connection to the top-down urban renewal programmes and shopping-mallisation of culture:

People's habits of watching films transform due to the shopping-mallisation of culture. Multiplexes redefine the movie-going culture here and everywhere; we cannot isolate the festival culture from it. At first the movie theatres were divided, then the ones, which did not divide their rooms, were closed down. Shopping malls, which mushroomed even at the very heart of Istanbul, have become the most important site for

socialisation for the Istanbulites. In these malls, comfortable and convenient movie theatres were opened and people got used to watching films in them and this started to turn the consumption of films into the consumption of any other consumer goods.

Azize participated in an anti-capitalist, if not Marxist discourse that opposed the understanding of film as a consumer product. She distinguished films from other consumer products and connected it to art, which represents a traditional perspective on cinema. In this view, comfort in multiplexes was regarded as in opposition to the non-commodified experience of film-going in large format movie theatres. This was the reason why Azize defined film festivals as an alternative space, as film festivals still used 'alternative' settings for film exhibition even when they used multiplexes as well.

Sinan (24, a student) talked about his thoughts and feelings on the shopping-mallisation of culture in this way:

The system creates and consolidates a certain kind of reception of films. Current states, the capitalist system and the AKP do not want to let you watch the films that question the validity of this system. Hence the old movie theatres are being demolished or closed down today, because they used to show the films against the logic of neo-liberalism.

'The system' here is linked to the neo-liberalisation of film attendance. Sinan was annoyed about the transformation of culture in Istanbul into a capitalist form of consumption through shopping-mallisation. He established a contrast between the past and today in terms of the radically increasing impact of global neo-liberalism on Istanbul's cityscape as well as the culture, which represented a nostalgic perspective on the past. Within the framework of this opposition, which was about my informants' past use of the spaces and films at the IIFF, a certain tendency to keep the past traditions vis-à-vis the practices of today arose, which has radically changed through the increasing penetration of neo-liberal globalisation. Additionally, Sinan's experiences also link to the tendency to keep 'secular modernity' in Turkey (Özyürek, 2006; Keyman, 2007; Gökarıksel, 2012). Secular modernity, Özyürek (2006: 90) argues, rests on

interference of the modernist Turkish state on people's domestic lives, such as marriage, religious practices and clothing, in order to make sure that citizens engaged in the necessary practices of modernity in private so that they could constitute a modern and public sphere. This community, who described themselves as 'secular', this public sphere, was contaminated by the interference of the AKP with its Islamist agenda, such as the construction of mosques in every corner of Istanbul or the limits and increasing taxes on alcoholic beverages.

Nesrin (38, who works in the education sector) related it to Beyoğlu:

In the past people used to come to Beyoğlu to buy books or to see some good films. Now it became a centre of shopping just like anywhere else. There was no Zara or Mango here. We can talk about a gentrification of this place and the culture too.

In this sense, gentrification is not only an economic but also a political and cultural phenomenon. As it was in the experience of Zeliha, the culture has been gentrified in Beyoğlu, in which only a few upper class people can participate. Becoming like anywhere else meant the loss of 'home' in the face of the penetration of capital and power in their alternative life spaces and counter-public spheres. Smith (2002: 439) shows that the most vital urban dimension of neo-liberalism is gentrification, which amounts to reclaiming the city for the middle classes. In Istanbul, the state has used deprivation and urban decline as excuses to smash the historical buildings and sites of the city, in order to turn them into shopping malls, studios and offices. It affected this community at the IIFF, as they previously considered themselves as the owners of these spaces. Although buying books also indicates a middle-class activity, which suggests that the loss of these spaces was about the loss of a 'bourgeois' environment that emphasized difference and celebrated the arts, versus a homogenized, globalised culture of middle-class consumption, the past Beyoğlu also represented the combination of middle class neighbourhoods such as Cihangir and Asmalimescit and working class and deprived neighbourhoods such as Tarlabası and Sulukule, in which 'the poor were displaced and these

neighbourhoods were transformed for the use of upper-classes' (Islam & Sakızoğlu, 2015: 257). Global chain stores, hotels and studios replaced the independent shops as well as neighbourhoods where minority groups and working classes lived.

My informants attributed great importance to Beyoğlu as the centre of cinema and culture, which was once a historical place full of independent movie theatres, venues, shops, cafes and bars. Today Beyoğlu is full of Starbucks, Hard Rock Cafes, H&M, shopping malls in addition to neo-Ottoman styled hotels, Islamic cafes and an increased police presence around Taksim Square. The director of IIFF, Azize, also articulated the transformation of Beyoğlu in the 2000s and 2010s:

Beyoğlu is radically transforming today. The fact that the municipality asked for a removal of chairs and tables from outside of cafes and bars, the closing down of independent shops and opening of chain stores such as the H&M or Starbucks, the possible closing down of the most historical bookstore Robinson Crusoe, the shutting down of the historical arcades, playing loud music from bars out on the streets changed the 'Beyoğlu as we know it'. The disposition of the Beyoğlu and Istanbul municipalities is to turn it completely into a touristic space. The configuration of Beyoğlu as a cultural and historical site is slowly diminishing.

What becomes visible here is that my informants bemoaned the removal of individual character and specificity attached to it, which signified a more cosmopolitan Beyoğlu. In addition, in Azize's experience, the loss of Beyoğlu's cultural and historical past implied assimilation to the new Islamist neo-liberal regime. The AKP government has aimed to transform the existing spaces into abstract spaces devoid of the Kemalist history, as it symbolised a secular and modern history for them. The government has attempted to annihilate the previous spaces in order to create their own spaces. In this regard, in addition to the neoliberal transformations in Istanbul beginning from the 1980s, the desire of the Islamist government to create its own legacy from the early 2000s

(which goes hand in hand with neo-liberalism) created the Islamist global city of Istanbul.

In this changing experience of festival attendance, Devrim made a more specific comparison of her moviegoing experience in the multiplexes and the independent movie theatres during the film festival. Devrim said:

In the Nişantaşı City's, I lose the impact of the film on me while I try to leave the shopping mall using the moving escalators. These escalators and the shops around me make me feel that I partake in something automatic all of a sudden. I lose a variety of different feelings I receive from the films and become part of that automatic atmosphere.

Devrim's experience was not so clearly recognisable as a Marxist or anti-neoliberal position, unlike Azize's experience with shopping malls. Instead, it was a very personal experience, but it nevertheless highlighted that film at film festivals is experienced as something that is not automatic, but instead, as something we can denote as humane, speaking about the human condition and making the audience feel moved in their humanity. As Hubbard (2001) discussed, cinema-going is about the consumption of place as much as it is about the consumption of film. This means that the ability of specific cinemas to appeal to particular audiences needs to be understood not only in terms of the films they show, but also the (often improvised and unconscious) forms of practice played out within the spaces of the auditorium, foyer and so on' (Hubbard, 2001: 259). So, having them screened at multiplexes in shopping malls undermines the film's ability to speak to the viewer as art because the viewer is repositioned. Furthermore, other than the film itself, this experience of my informants was related to their use of streets more in the context of the increasing street and protest culture in the 2000s Istanbul, which impacted upon their engagement with the festival spaces.

For my informants, the independent movie theatre signified a 'home away from home', especially in the face of the increasing repression on their autonomy and freedom. Korhan also distinguished different movie theatres and insisted on the idea that you should actually seek pain in movie theatres rather than comfort in the context of film festival attendance:

In a movie theatre, you should feel pain, the seats should not be that comfortable. You should be aware of your surroundings. You do not need the best air conditioning system. You do not need comfort but you need a proper big screen, which could embrace you and make you feel a belonging to the film and the place. The screen should encompass your experience. The Nişantaşı City's movie theatre does not do that, I need a movie theatre, which directs me to a street and does not have securities outside. The movie theatre should be a movie theatre, not something else.

In different but similar ways, my informants attached a great importance to the atmosphere of the film festival and talked about its atmosphere more than the programme of the festival or the individual films. In this regard, even if the seats are painful, Korhan described it as a 'good pain' because he was the actor of his own pain. Korhan felt as an actor and more autonomous in independent movie theatres, but felt 'controlled' in multiplexes. In this framework, the comfortable seats and good air conditioning were against the authentic experience of the film festival, which was not a commercial activity for him. Korhan wanted immersion via screen size, but at the same time wanted to be reminded of the space that is not a commercial enterprise. The visibility of securities in front of the movie theatre also points to the increasing state control on the people in Istanbul and Turkey. The increasing securitisation is one of the most important characteristics of Turkey under the rule of the AKP government, which is commonly referred to as a constructed police state.

From an alternative point of view, by making use of focus groups, Dickson's research shows how a combination of the multiplexes and independent movie theatres define the exhibitions at the Glasgow Film Festival (GFF). During the festival, the top floor of the Cineworld was allocated for the film festival. Dickson found out that audiences of the GFF rationalise their attendance at this multiplex during festival time, in contrast to their feelings of attendance at this movie theatre other than during the festival time. The GFF audience enjoyed spending time in the multiplex during the festival because the

top floor has been dedicated to the festival. This audience felt that the space was distinct from the rest of the cinema during the festival time as it was disconnected from the rest of the multiplex and it was reconfigured as a 'festival space'. One of Dickson's participants described it as an 'occupation' (Dickson, 2015: 710-711). In this regard, the similarity between Dickson's and my fieldwork is that the festival audiences consider it 'different' to see films in independent movie theatres and multiplexes. However, while the audience of the GFF described themselves as the occupiers of the multiplex due to the designated floor, my informants at the IIFF defined the multiplexes and shopping malls as occupying the previously popular independent movie theatres and as a result occupying their previously 'authentic' experience of the festival.

This community tended to distinguish true movie theatres, which would inflict you with pain, from more comfortable/commercial ones. However, more than an elitist perspective, they felt negative about the multiplexes, because they regarded the commercial strategies as a symbol of global capitalism merging with political Islam, which made them feel marginalised. Nevertheless, not all of my informants (even if this group does not represent the tendency of the majority of my informants) felt completely negative towards the use of the multiplexes, even when they protested or were against the loss of independent spaces in Istanbul. Especially after the Gezi uprising, this group thought that having another 'different' type of movie theatre signified that the festival was spreading to other parts of Istanbul. Although the festival mainly spread to affluent neighbourhoods and the multiplexes in Istanbul, this group of my informants considered it as a positive thing. They believed that the popularity of the film festival might mean that it reaches more people. For instance Duygun (36, a project manager), observed the increasing popularity of the IIFF within her own social circles due to the addition of the multiplex:

I used to use the REXX movie theatre more than the other ones because it is very close to my house. I also started to attend the Nişantaşı City's and I feel like the mass popularity of the IIFF stems from the addition of this movie theatre. The IIFF is not isolated to Beyoğlu anymore, it touched other people's lives in different parts of Istanbul. In my office

only two or three people used to follow the IIFF but now we are 30 people. The festival attendees used to be a homogeneous group of people in the past, now it extended to other locales and other lives.

In Duygun's experience, the IIFF's use of the movie theatres in a shopping mall which is situated in a luxurious area as in Nişantaşı City's, would transform another segment of society. Her experiences as a worker of a prestigious bank in an upper level position showed her that her colleagues transformed when the film festival came to the area where they lived. Similarly, Perihan, who also worked for an international corporation, experienced the spread of the film festival to other neighbourhoods and movie theatres as a great improvement, even when these places are situated in luxurious districts:

The IIFF is more widespread and popular now, after extending to different parts of Istanbul. It used to serve only a little group of people, now more and more working people follow it. I think, they added the Nişantaşı City's to satisfy the needs of this group and it is not wrong. They need to show these films in different movie theatres for them to reach out (to) different communities of people.

Duygun and Perihan were two of my informants who were happy about the addition of the Cities movie theatre to the IIFF's programme. I think this stemmed from the fact that they had access to a different segment of society, an upper socioeconomic group. Duygun and Perihan thought that this would also invite more people, which is a good thing. Balca also draws attention to the importance of creating a festival culture in different parts of the city, especially in underprivileged districts, rather than in another 'privileged' part of Istanbul, such as Beyoğlu, Kadıköy or Nişantaşı:

The festival should not be isolated to some parts of Istanbul; it should reach more and more parts like how the Başka Cinema makes use of different venues in various parts of Istanbul such as Başakşehir. I observed through the theatres I attended in various parts of the city that it could work out and transform the culture in different parts of Istanbul.

For instance, I went to a play in Ümraniye, it was a difficult play but the room was full regardless of that.

Balca suggested the use of under-privileged areas in Istanbul such as Ümraniye, which had the potential for transformation. The festival generally used only two parts of Istanbul, namely Beyoğlu and Kadıköy, which are the cultural hubs of Istanbul. In the 2010s, Nişantaşı and Ortaköy were added to this, which are the central districts of Istanbul, in which upper socio-economic groups live. Balca's experience was important in understanding the geographic maps of festivals as they tend to use the comfort zones of cities and do not really try different routes. Balca's remark also represented a Marxist viewpoint on art in believing the art's transformative capability if it can reach a mass amounts of people.

Kerim (28, an assistant orchestra manager) felt negative towards the demise of old movie theatres and took political action about them, but also as an organiser of music events, he was critical of the constant criticism of people against the use of other options such as multiplexes:

We do not want to throw our audiences in the middle of capitalist consumption. I feel the same and understand why people do not want to pass by Arby's or McDonald's before they listen to a concert or see a film but what shall we do? In the face of the loss of these movie theatres or venues, shall we cancel the festivals or events?

Being a worker in one of the creative industries, Kerim found the criticism against these organisations and events too harsh within the context of the existing and remaining exhibition outlets. Although he thought that we needed to take political action against the top-down urban regeneration programmes, which signified the neo-liberalisation of spaces, he did not find the suggestion of the audiences not to use the new venues as a constructive criticism of the organisers, as there are not many other big and independent venues, especially if it is necessary to accommodate a lot of people in one go. He felt trapped between the radical changes of the cityscape and creative industries on the one hand and the demands of the audiences on the other. Therefore, although the

majority of my informants were against the use of the multiplexes, the issue was not that simple, but quite complex.

During my fieldwork I also observed that the consumption of particular places that my informants associated with the film festival were also vital for their festival attendance. My informants constantly invited me to other independent venues around movie theatres in Kadıköy and Beyoğlu. These spaces also implied a less capitalist consumption for them, which was in harmony with their anti-neoliberal and anti-capitalist dispositions. In addition to their desire to keep and use the independent movie theatres, which they identified as the principal spaces of film festival culture, my informants preserved their consistency in using other independent spaces such as cafes or bars and considered them as part of their authentic festival spaces against neo-liberal spaces. Due to the fact that the IIFF is a place-bounded film festival, the movie theatres, as well as the spaces around the film festival, represented rituals. Festivals can serve as a showcase for a city and they can brand cities (Van Aalst & Van Melik, 2012: 197). The IIFF promoted and branded some of the places in Beyoğlu like the Cezayir Restaurant, as the IIFF used these places to host their guests or organise press conferences. In this regard, in addition to movie theatres, the audiences of the film festivals associate other spaces with the film festival. For instance Zöhre (36, unemployed) related other spaces such as bars with the film festival:

We go to a bar called the Kırmızı Tazi³⁵. We became regulars of that bar during the festival and the bar became a stopping place during the festival time, we now associate it with the festival. We see some other people from the film festival there and I also realised that the person who runs the bar is somebody I know from the university. I feel like we are part of a big community.

³⁵ It is a small independent bar within five minutes walking distance from the Atlas and Beyoğlu movie theatres.

The feeling of community in both independent movie theatres and other independent spaces such as independent bars was one of the most important feelings for this audience, because they felt isolated and alone in the face of the radical transformations in society. From what Zöhre said, the rituals and 'spirit' of the IIFF spread from the independent movie theatres to other spaces. In this context, the film identity of Beyoğlu not only consists of its connection to the previous industry or the current rise of the New Cinema in Turkey but it is also constituted by some independent spaces being associated with cinema and other arts. In particular, it was home to independent cafes, bars, theatres, and cinemas, whereas in the 2000s, global capital increasingly penetrated the district via the shops of McDonalds, Mango, and Starbucks.

In this section, I examined the anti-neoliberal and Marxist discourses of my informants, which might imply a seemingly conservative perspective, especially towards the popular culture or the commercial exhibition outlets. However, more than an elitist and conservative approach, this community felt marginalised in the fast pace of the top-down changes such as the urban renewal in Istanbul and embraced nostalgic and anti-neoliberal and anti-capitalist feelings. In conclusion to this section, the perception of the multiplexes as capitalist enterprise shaped the audience behaviour of my informants; not only those who were against the use of multiplexes but also those who used it and promoted its usage. In this regard, the ways they engaged with the films and the festival changed with the addition of the Nişantaşı City's in the IIFF, which stemmed from their anti-neoliberal attitudes (this was also obvious from their engagement with other independent spaces such as cafes against the chain stores). This is related to their attachment to the past, which connects to the nostalgia culture at the IIFF. The ways this community felt negative about the mushrooming of the global chain stores in Beyoğlu and their replacement of 'independent' shops and movie theatres represent an anti-neoliberal and anti-capitalist perspective and action hand in hand with nostalgic feelings for the past. However, this nostalgia was not a restorative nostalgia, as in being content with the 'comfort' of the past, but it was a reflective nostalgia as in looking at the past in order to change the future. They wanted to find a way of

making these spaces similar to the way they were in their childhood and embraced anti-capitalist identities in order to transform them for the future.

6.5.Conclusion to the Chapter

The uses of the spaces constituted the most important feature of this community's practices of and engagement with the festival. This community associated the festival space in and film identity of Beyoğlu to its position as a centre of cultural and creative industries in the history of Turkey, including the Yeşilçam film industry. In the 2010s, the efforts of the Islamist neo-liberalist municipality, hand in hand with the government, radically transformed Beyoğlu into a tourist artefact and commercial centre. This impacted upon the previously cosmopolitan neighbourhoods such as Tarlabası, the iconic buildings such as the AKM or the EMT. In this regard, this audience community's identities and their attachment to the festival implied that they were frustrated with the commodification of festival spaces and the loss of cosmopolitan spaces and neighbourhoods. However, Beyoğlu (although in a different form) has always been one of the most important centres of commerce in Istanbul, which shows that this community idealised the past form of commerce in their nostalgic feelings for the past situation of these spaces. As is the case with nostalgia in general, they imagined another past, which simply was not there. For instance, Vakko, which is a luxurious Turkish fashion company, was one of the most visible buildings on the İstiklal before the AKP's reign and it was replaced by Mango in 2006. Beyoğlu in the 1990s and early 2000s was home to independent cafes and venues, but these were still commercial spaces although they were not global chain stores.

In this context, this chapter has analysed the nostalgic feelings of this community towards the previous spaces of the festival. Two oppositional understandings of nostalgia threw light on nostalgia's relation to politics. The first strand of thought regarded nostalgia in line with conservatism or

reactionary movements (Bennett, 1996; Alan, Atkinson & Montgomery, 1995; Gupta and Ferguson, 1992), while at the other end of the spectrum lay the theories which conceptualised it as a projection from the past to the future and as a critical tool (Tannock, 1995; Lutz, 2004; Pickering and Keightley, 2006). Rather than embracing a restorative nostalgia, which tends to reconstruct the lost home, often in line with religious and/or nationalist revivals, my informants felt a reflective nostalgia, which does not follow a single plot but explores ways of inhabiting many places at once and imagining different time zones; it loves details, not symbols. In this regard, the EMT stood for a leftist possibility rather than as a symbol of the Republican past. This chapter has discussed the ways in which this community's feelings for the EMT and previous spaces of the IIFF symbolised their intention to inhabit less capitalist spaces and their willingness to create an anti-capitalist future, which were the discussions in the last two sections of the chapter.

The second section of this chapter displayed this community's anti-neoliberal and at times Marxist responses to the penetration of the commercial symbols at the IIFF. This section pointed out their reactions to neo-liberal symbols at the festival such as discriminating access cards, alienating and 'precarious' labour, and the sponsorship of a bank. The last section of the chapter summarises this community's reaction to the neo-liberalisation of spaces in Beyoğlu and the festival. In this respect, the majority of this community felt negative towards the addition of the Nişantaşı City's multiplex to the programme of the IIFF, which impacted upon the audience behaviour. The majority of my informants did not feel the same when they watched the same film as part of a large format movie theatre and a multiplex, while some of them perceived the addition of the multiplex still implied a good thing, as the festival can reach another group of people via the use of a different district other than Beyoğlu. Accordingly, some of my informants questioned the borders of 'the festival space', which does not extend beyond the immediate cultural centres of Istanbul, in a bid to include spaces in less affluent places like Ümraniye. To conclude, this film festival audience attached meanings of community, homeliness and belonging to the EMT, which implied that they wanted to keep

their childhood memories but it also implied that they wanted to claim ownership of their future spaces against the radical impact of neo-liberalism.

Chapter 7

Reclaiming the Right to the Spaces

7.1.Introduction

This thesis maintains that the spaces of the film festival, their social attributes and their functioning as cultural counter-public spheres constitute the most prominent features of festival attendance for the audiences, which also accounts for the festivals' ongoing impact and prominence, even when there is a multiplicity of outlets within which to watch films. Thus we need to examine audiences' engagement with these spaces, mostly because festivals make use of various and differing venues that audiences may, or may not, attend outside of festival time (Dickson, 2015). In my case study, the EMT in particular and Beyoğlu in general stood out as the most prominent spaces that my informants engaged with and socialised in, especially during the festival time. The discontent with the 'new' spaces of the IIFF in the context of a radically transforming Istanbul and the urban culture remained neither in the format of complaints nor in the form of preaching revolution from sofas. This audience community took political action in order to actually claim their right to the city and movie theatres. Although some members of this community rightly felt that the new spaces of the film festival opened up the festival to new audience groups, the majority of this audience community aimed to keep their 'past' movie theatres and cities and ignored the potential within the addition of new venues to the film festival. Overall, this chapter demonstrates the complexity of their attachment to the spaces of the film festival, which also initiated their political activism.

The desire to protect their own rituals and past spaces meant not a reactionary and/or status-quo culture, but implied a resistance. For Zukin (1995: 293-294), 'spaces are experienced by many different people who inhabit them and what is culture to one group may be repression to another'. The loss of independent movie theatres would mean more opportunities for some people but for this community it implied oppression and lack of freedom to choose from different alternatives. The protests to keep 'EMT as it is' as part of the IIFF, stemmed from this audience's discontent with the rapidly shifting urban culture in Istanbul; about the shopping-mallisation of culture and the decay of the less-

commercial public spaces. In the face of the increasing penetration of the shopping malls in the loss of other 'old' buildings, not only the urban structure but also the urban culture in Istanbul have radically transformed. My informants attempted to protect the Emek movement and the Gezi Park, not only as symbols of repression but also as actual spaces, through the Emek movement and the Gezi uprising. This, I discuss, is because in this age the struggles and resistances originate from the intention to protect the spaces that people inhabit. This chapter will show my informants' participation in the Emek movement and the Gezi uprising, in order to claim right to these spaces, which changed their identities, their use of the film festival and spaces.

7.2.Reclaiming the Right to the Emek Movie Theatre

Henri Lefebvre coined the term 'Right to the City' in his book *La droit a la ville* in 1968. From the 1990s on, the 'right to the city' debate became popular among both academics and activists (Schmid, 2012; Friendly, 2013). Lefebvre (1996) assigned the groups and classes which are capable of revolutionary initiative, the task to take over and find solutions for urban problems. The first thing to do is to defeat the dominant strategies and ideologies (Lefebvre, 1996: 154). In this thesis, my aim is not to romanticise social movements and/or the actors behind them as they have their own conservative underlying discourses and actions, but I point out the strategies of this particular community, which intended to defeat the current dominant ideology in the world and Turkey: neo-liberalism.

In order to challenge neo-liberalism's impact on the urban space, Lefebvre (1996: 155) suggested two solutions: a political programme of urban reform, which is not defined by the framework of prevailing society or subjugated to a 'realism' and mature planning projects which consist of models and spatial forms without concern for their current feasibility. In this chapter, I employ the concept of space not only in reference to its physical or geographical attributes, but also our own improvement of material living conditions in the spaces we inhabit. Through the use of the Yeşilçam Street and

occupying the EMT and the surrounding spaces, this community took their own decisions in order to claim their ownership of them. At this point, it should be noted that no activist group in a city starts in a vacuum. The targets and actions of community activists in particular are highly influenced by the political traditions in their own city (Wood & Moore, 2002: 27). As spaces have been at the forefront of the increasing authoritarianism of the Turkish state, the struggles against authoritarianism happened through the claiming right to the city.

Lefebvre positioned the working classes as the actors behind urban struggles. However, in contemporary case studies, rather than the working classes, it appears that heterogeneous groups and classes of people intended to claim their right to the spaces, such as the communities in Istanbul. For Coggin and Pieterse (2012: 259-260) this right extends to all who seek inclusion, habitation, appropriation or participation and, as such, is claimed also by non-working-class marginalised groups or, indeed, by anyone who participates in the struggle over the city's form and meaning. As the new social movements do not necessarily revolve around the struggles of the working classes, other ethnically, religiously, or sexually marginalised groups become actors in claiming their rights to the city.

Harvey (2008: 272) defined 'the right to the city' as far more than a right of individual access to the resources within the city: it is, rather, a right to change ourselves by changing the city to better suit our heart's desire, it is a collective right and a collective power over the process of urbanisation. In this regard, claiming the right to the city is necessarily a collective action, even when it transforms people's individual identities. The right to the city, according to McCann (2002: 78), 'entails the right not to be marginalised in decision-making, nor to be channeled into certain political discussions or decision-making processes and not into others on the basis of one's similarity to or difference from other individuals or groups'. The marginalised groups not only claim the right to the city with their own struggles but they also become active citizens in order to decide the future of their own cities. 'Right to the city relates to broader conceptions of dignified livelihood –including aspects of democratic participation, human rights, equal access to goods and services, reclaiming a

sense of a public sphere, environmental justice or solidarity within society' (Köhler & Wissen, 2003: 946). In this respect, the right to the city is also closely related to the concept of public sphere, where people reclaim their agency in their free expression of their thoughts, create forms of solidarity and create political involvement and action.

The right to the city is not only related to the protection of past spaces or keeping the past form of cities, but 'the right to the city is simultaneously grounded in the reality of present, everyday life in the city and in a continuously shifting and contested vision of a future city that is actively imagined, struggled and strived for' (Coggin & Pieterse, 2012: 259). The struggles of those who claim the right to the city originates from the conditions of the past and today but it is a never-ending process as it rests on constant resistance to and negotiation with those who are in positions of power. 'The right to the city reframes the place of decision-making away from the state and toward urban inhabitants' (Friendly, 2013: 160; Purcell, 2002: 102). Rather than waiting for the state to make the decisions for them, urban communities create their own initiatives, civil societies, and organisations to become actively involved in decision-making and politics, especially in relation to the urban space. Therefore, Purcell (2002) points out that the right to the city lies at the basis of the concepts of urban citizenship and politics.

To physically access and occupy urban space is the most basic element of the right to the city (Lyytinen, 2015: 597). In order to physically access the spaces such as squares, parks and theatres which commonly belong to or are run by institutions of states or corporations related to state and not used for the good of the public, the people occupy the spaces and appropriate these spaces for their social and political purposes. In an interview, Harvey (Saadi, 2015) remarked that the world is increasingly urbanised and the discontent emerges around the quality of urban life, which triggers social movements and uprisings. According to Harvey (interviewed by Saadi, 2015), the urban question has become a central question today, and the qualities of urban life are moving to the forefront of contemporary protests. In this respect, the marginalised groups rise up against the occupation of their own spaces, which implies becoming active citizens.

Street struggles and demonstrations have long been part of history but today they are happening simultaneously in many parts of the world: 'the uprisings in the Arab world, Occupy Wall Street spreading to other global cities, the daily neighborhood protests in China's major cities, Latin America's piqueteros etc. The city is a space where the powerless can make history. Becoming present, visible, to each other can alter the character of powerlessness' (Sassen, 2011: 574). Becoming visible to each other and sharing the same large-scale spaces such as squares and parks empowered the communities that previously felt powerless. The worldwide increase in social movements in urban settings accounts for the global empowering aspect of people's engagement with urban spaces. The common ground of the current social movements is the ways in which the activists make history through their occupation of these spaces in various parts of the world. In addition to the Occupy movements, as Monterescu and Shaindlinger's (2013: 229) research shows, the role of cities was central both when the activists enabled political mobilisation in different countries across the Arab peninsula and later when the state repressed the protests that constituted the Arab revolts. Because of the massive intervention on the public spaces, this particular festival community started to take action, which was also related to the global rise of the social movements against neo-liberalism and neo-colonialism, such as the Arab Spring, the university occupations in Holland and Canada, and the urban rallies against austerity in Greece.

The new political activism such as the Occupy movements all around the world, the Egyptian uprising, Rojava and Baltimore, stem from people's urgent need and desire to protect their own spaces from the 'neo-liberal' and 'neo-colonial' 'occupiers'. These examples illuminate my case study, as all of them were organised by people who needed to find an urgent way out of the colonisation and exploitation of their own spaces and the rituals associated with these spaces by various power-holders, such as the universities' free spaces against neo-liberal attacks, Rojava's cities against the attack of the ISIS etc. Currently, cities are the foci of people's struggles in the small movements and uprisings related to urban heritage and culture. The Emek movement was one

of these movements in which people sought for their rights to the movie theatre. In this way, this community aimed to participate in the decision-making process of the movie theatre.

In my fieldwork, the right to the city meant a right to a more democratic and just livelihood, an active citizenship, concern for human rights and an equal access to the public and semi-public spaces in Istanbul, especially in Beyoğlu, such as Gezi Park and the Emek movie theatre. In Istanbul, claiming the right to the city meant to save the city from the blockade of the police forces and tear gas and to have solidarity networks in the face of the oppressive regime in Turkey. The activism that was constitutive of the Emek movement and the Gezi uprising sprang from the motivations to keep our public spaces, which symbolised our right to a dignified livelihood and solidarity. Istanbul's urban structure mobilised many against the radical urban regeneration programmes and the activism to keep the EMT as it is, which happened at the same time with and was fed by other national and international movements to prevent the city from its ultimate commercialisation, privatisation and gentrification.

There were other collective protests in and around the EMT before the 2000s, for instance, the meeting for the 1st of May celebrations in 1987, which marked the first 1st of May celebrations after the coup d'état of 1980. It took place in the foyer of the EMT with the participation of intellectuals, politicians, film industry workers and many other people. The Emek movement began on the 3rd of April 2010. After the public announcement of the demolition project of the EMT, a diverse crowd of hundreds organised the protests against the demolition. This collective invited everybody to protect the greasy and old seats of the EMT against the calculative mindset of the rent-seekers. The 'Istanbul is ours, Emek is ours' collective, which organised the protests against the demolition, used a non-hierarchical organisation, like that of the Gezi uprising, which I will discuss in the following section. Saying that the real owner of the EMT was not the construction companies or the government, the 'Istanbul is ours, the Emek is ours' collective announced that the Emek belonged to the residents of the city.

The beginning of the protests in 2010 was on the same day as the opening of the 29th Istanbul Film Festival in which Ertuğrul Günay³⁶ explained the reason why the EMT needed to be demolished. He said ‘This year we are not able to open the festival in Beyoğlu. However, rather than the filthy and greasy seats, I would sit on the new seats and celebrate the festival in the new clean room of the new Emek. Let’s pray that the judiciary will not intervene and that we finish the movie theatre soon.’ The religious discourses of the government like ‘praying’ hand in hand with the discourses that tended to humiliate the look of the EMT displayed the underlying logic of market Islam in Turkey. The demolition project was based on the premises of the Emek’s being full of rats, worn out etc. In the first opening of the film festival in 2010, the ‘Emek is ours, Istanbul is ours’ collective showed *Man with a Movie Camera* (Dziga Vertov, 1929). On the same day, the activist community prepared its own screen and played film soundtracks before and after the screening. The screening took place after the protestors’ march from the beginning of the Istiklal Street to the closed down EMT on the Yeşilçam Street. The most common slogans were ‘Emek is ours, Istanbul is ours’ and ‘do not watch, reclaim the Emek’ in 2010. The vocabulary used in these slogans connects the activities related to the art of cinema such as watching and movie theatres with those related to urban spaces, such as reclaiming. Furthermore, one of the most remarkable slogans of the Emek movement in 2011 was ‘this is just a beginning, we keep struggling’, which later became the main slogan of the Gezi uprising. The slogans thus show organic relationship and the continuity between the two social movements.

2010 marked the beginning of many different protests, especially during the IIFF, which were constitutive of the Emek movement. On the 10th of April, 2010, the activists organised a demonstration after the alternative opening of the IIFF. Furthermore, on the same day of the closing of the film festival (the

³⁶ Ertuğrul Günay was the AKP Government’s Minister of Culture and Tourism from 2007 to 2013.

18th of April, 2010), the Plastic Golden Tulip Awards³⁷ were distributed. As it appeared from the pseudo award ceremony adjacent to the IIFF, the political actions that constituted the Emek movement had creative vision in them. Creative protests meant not solely using the traditional avenues of protesting, like marching, writing a conventional press release and demonstrating, but in addition to them, these techniques included having street bands, dancing, showing films on the streets, the occupation of spaces and/or creating a park culture, i.e. the use of public parks as spaces of participatory democracy. During the Emek movement, activist communities occupied the previously active street of Yeşilçam especially during the festival time and claimed ownership of it. This included showing films, organising forums and pseudo-award ceremonies on the street. In this respect, the occupation method became the leitmotif of small movements as well as uprisings in the 2010s, which changed the ways people engage with seemingly different spaces. The activists' occupation of streets, squares and also movie theatres intertwined the protest sites with the 'conventional' sites of culture such as festivals.

Street culture was significant for this community and their engagement with the Emek movement and the uprising was part of this tendency. Hikmet narrated the first protests in April 2010:

The first protests started at the opening of the film festival in 2010. These demonstrations were quite attached to the festival, almost within it. We used and deactivated the 'dead' Yeşilçam Street during the IIFF. We screened movies on the street so the cinema culture expanded to the streets and became part of the street culture.

Through the social movement, my informants reused and re-socialised the spaces that they previously used and felt a sense of belonging to. They did not allow the movie theatres to rot and did not easily let the government and corporations transform the Yeşilçam Street into something else. The

³⁷ These awards were pseudo alternative awards that were distributed to the owners and collaborators of the demolition project, such as the municipality of Beyoğlu or the Ministry of Culture and Tourism of Turkey.

resocialisation through demonstrations, film screenings and playing music meant claiming right to their own space and lives. The use of the streets during the festival implied a merging of the festivals' actual spaces such as the movie theatres and other festival venues with the street. Also, the intertwining of protest spaces with the festival spaces expanded the understanding of festival activism, which was previously dealt with in the boundaries of film festivals' own spaces (Archibald & Miller, 2011b; Loist, 2011). The festival activism incorporated into the street culture, where audiences coalesced with other organisations, urban activists and professionals.

Sanem described the commencing of the protests in 2010, in reference to the actors/activists behind it:

The Union of Chambers of Turkish Engineers and Architects (TMMOB) has participated in these sorts of political activities before the Emek movement. However, for the EMT, they have become more insistent. The fact that the TMMOB partook in our struggle, since its inception in 2010, made our struggle a more powerful and heterogeneous one. The cinephiles united with the people of the urban research, which benefitted both sides and resulted in the cooperation of different communities. Because the TMMOB also participated in it, the demonstrations attracted more attention from the press and other people. That is why we reached many people especially in 2013, which was our most crowded demonstration. Our film magazine also worked like a public relations' company and called out for all actors, actresses, directors etc. For almost five years we worked for this nearly every day (2010-2015).

Sanem described the special feature of the Emek movement as its inclusion of not only the cinephiles of the IIFF, but also architects, engineers, artists and other groups which represent some professional groups that has not commonly mobilised together. In this regard, this movement included heterogeneous communities, but not necessarily the 'working classes', as 'heterogeneous' communities is one of the underlying characteristics of the current movements. Furthermore, Sanem used her film magazine not only as a cultural space but also as a political space. Her politicisation changed her relationship to this

cultural space in addition to her labour. Her relation to her own labour also displayed a Marxist (1970) understanding of labour, as she worked as a film critic in the morning, an activist in the afternoon and public relations coordinator in the evening. This went against the capitalist understanding of work as she did not have to remain within the boundaries of one job.

In 2010, right after the protests for the EMT, the same collective organised protests against the demolition of the Rüya movie theatre, which was also in the same complex as the EMT. The screening of the last film *Mın Dıt* (Miraz Bezar, 2009) took place at the Rüya on the 6th of May in 2010, nine months after the EMT was closed down. Around this time, the movement had already started and expanded to the protection of this movie theatre. After the screening of the last film, there were similar slogans to the Emek protests on the streets of Beyoğlu, such as 'the Rüya is ours, Istanbul is ours', 'Don't watch, protect your movie theatre', 'Urban regeneration is a state lie', 'the Rüya is everywhere, resistance everywhere'. The night ended with the protesters eating profiteroles at the Inci Patisserie³⁸, which was in the same complex as these two movie theatres. As I discussed in the previous chapter, eating in the traditional and independent places, especially when they are also doomed to be demolished, also signified a political activity for my informants, like eating profiteroles at the Inci.

The fact that my informants' efforts in their own social movement worked and they were able to attract the attention of the public slowed the demolition process, which made my informants feel that they had their own agency for their own decision-making. In the meantime, they felt a greater sense of belonging to the movement, their own spaces, the IIFF and the urban heritage, which created an empowerment for their identities. Dahlgren (2006: 275) highlights that audiences that coalesce into publics who talk about political issues – and begin to enact their civic identities and make use of their civic

³⁸ The Inci Patisserie, which was founded in 1944, was an independent patisserie. It was closed down in the same complex with the Rüya and Emek movie theatres. It was known to have the best profiteroles in Istanbul and was reopened in another nearby street in Beyoğlu a year after, in 2013.

competencies – move from the private realm into the public one, making use of and developing their cultures of citizenship. In this regard, beginning from 2010, their previously ‘private’ realm transformed into a public sphere through their activist participation and awareness of their civic competencies. Up until 2014, the protests became an indispensable part of the IIFF, which consisted of more or less similar demonstrations with creative methods and strategies in use.

Although the demolition project of the EMT was announced in 2010, which also marked the beginning of the Emek movement, the company entitled the Kamer Construction Company, hand in hand with the Beyoğlu Municipality and the state, started implementing the project, i.e. actually demolishing the EMT, at the beginning of the IIFF in 2013. This accelerated the protests and increased the participation of the public in 2013. Sanem also described the beginning of the protests in 2013:

We were around 50 people on the 31st of March, 2013. We decided that we were going to occupy the EMT. We smashed the door of the movie theatre and went in. They strengthened the outside gate with wooden stuff but it was not difficult to get in; one of us broke the gate and we all went in. We went inside and documented the condition of the EMT. There was a rhythm band with us, they kept playing music in the meantime. However, the police was going to take us into custody or do something violent and there were not many people left outside so we could not have stayed in there for a long time. What we desired then happened two months later at the Gezi uprising.

This audience community used occupation as a method for the first time on the 31st of March, 2013, which became a popular activity in the uprising towards the end of May, 2013. This community used the security weakness for a moment in order to occupy the EMT, which changed their ways of ‘negotiating with the police’. I was not there for this occupation because I was on my way from England to Istanbul, but my informants stressed that their occupation of the EMT initiated further violence upon them, which Sanem called ‘the revenge of the police forces’ almost a week later, on the 7th of April, 2013. The fact that this audience community went in and documented the condition of the movie

theatre meant that they were trying to be actively involved in the process of the decision-making of the movie theatre and claimed their own right to its fate, although the collective protests could not have prevented its ultimate demolition. My informants perceived this occupation as a forerunner of the occupation of the Gezi Park. The idea of 'occupation' was becoming more popular and it was acknowledged more as a remedy among this community.

After I arrived in Istanbul in April 2013, direct police violence and arrests of the protestors marked the IIFF. The arrests, the use of tear gas and water canons, the visibility of police forces, especially the increasing numbers and impact of the TOMA³⁹ vehicles, identified the urban culture in Beyoğlu. In April 2013, during the protests, many of the activists, including my informants, were hurt by the violent attacks of the police. Due to heavy police intervention during the protests, Janset injured her spinal cord. She hit the floor due to the canon gas coming out from a TOMA and was hospitalised on the day. On the same day, three other members of this community (who were not my informants) were taken into custody only because they were demonstrating on the street around the Yeşilçam Street. Later in the uprising, this kind of state violence became a norm in Turkey. In addition to Janset, most of this audience community experienced state violence. For instance, on the 15th of June, right after the Gezi Park was cleared by riot police, a gas canister hit a man running next to me. My sister and I carried this person into a taxi in order for him to be hospitalised while the gas canisters still flew around us, potentially threatening our own lives. Nagengast (1994) defined state violence as 'the social project of creating punishable categories of people'. The Turkish state consistently extended the categories of punishable people and added new categories to them. Balca described the 7th of April, 2013, which was the first protest after the occupation of EMT (I interviewed her on the 8th of April, 2013):

³⁹ The TOMA is an abbreviation for the Intervention Vehicle to Social Events. It is an armoured water cannon vehicle commonly used in Turkey, especially in the OG uprising. It has been widely used in the Kurdish region and its use in the 'Western' parts of Turkey increased from 2012 onwards.

Yesterday the police took people into custody for no reason; I was very scared. And some cafes nearby did not even give water to us who were affected by tear gas; it is very intimidating for the cinephiles and activists here.

This audience community defined two distinct periods of the IIFF, not only with reference to the adding of the multiplex in the programme of the IIFF, but also the physical violence of the state on them. My informants stressed that the direct state violence created 'another IIFF' and 'another Emek movement' which marked the increasing repression and violence of the Turkish state on the cultural as well as political communities in Turkey. Clearly, the shopkeepers behaved in an unsympathetic manner with the protestors partly due to their worries on the increasing density of protests to block tourism, which was also a common discourse during the Gezi uprising.

Not all of my informants were there for the protests on the day when the Emek movement experienced the violent attack of the police forces on the 7th of April, 2013. They, however, went out to protest the violence during the demonstration on the following day, the 8th of April, 2013 while the IIFF was also going on. Zöhre (35, unemployed) said:

We were not there for the first demonstration on the 7th of April when people were exposed to tear gas and police violence of all sorts. On the 8th of April, we organised another demonstration to protest the excessive violence during the first one. We not only marched on the street but also prepared a sticker like a graffiti version of the EMT, printed it and stuck it everywhere to attract the attention of the wider public and to create more awareness.

This audience not only used 'traditional' means of protesting like marching and protesting in order to claim their right to the city, but they also tried many different creative methods such as changing the look of the city; i.e. sticking stickers of the movie theatre everywhere. These creative methods in order to create more awareness in the general public and visibility via different methods continued through different forms of protests like stickers. The 'creativity' of these protests, however, beginning from the 7th of April, 2013, was interrupted

by the severe police violence. The increasing levels of violence and repression did not silence this community's willingness to claim their right to their own spaces and lives, but they continued to exercise their democratic rights even after they were exposed to direct physical violence.

Nil (28, a researcher) described the expansion of the movement for the protection of other movie theatres:

After our political action against the demolition of the EMT, there has been an awakening about other movie theatres. For instance our awareness on the Beyoğlu movie theatre started then. The Başka Cinema⁴⁰ also stemmed from such solidarity and an intention to look for alternative screenings, alternative films. In addition to cinemas, we have lost theatres. All of these transformations happened hand in hand, which changed the culture too. It is all about rent. We were late to respond to these top-down changes anyway. I still could not process that the Alkazar⁴¹ was gone before our struggles to keep the EMT and the Gezi Park. If we did something to protect it at that time, we would not have lost the Emek. But now I believe that we will not lose other spaces.

Nil remarked on the urgency of taking political action against the values that we were about to lose. The opposition here stemmed from the fast implementations of the governments whereas our efforts remained slow in comparison to them. Before the uprising, the EMT became a symbol for the loss of not only the independent movie theatres but also theatres and other cultural venues, which represented a modern and more democratic potential for Turkey. It also reminded this community about their past losses like the Alkazar movie theatre

⁴⁰ The Başka Cinema started with the motto of 'festival all year long' in order to showcase alternative films in movie theatres. It first started in November 2013 after the OG in four movie theatres in two cities. By 2015, this year-long festival showcases independent and world films in sixteen movie theatres in six cities across Turkey.

⁴¹ The Alkazar was a small independent movie theatre on the İstiklal Street, Beyoğlu, with two rooms, screening only world and independent cinema. It was active from 1923 until 2010. In 2010, the managers announced its closing down due to financial downswing.

and their awareness to take political action. It not only triggered further social movements but also an increasing intention to create 'our own communities' against 'their' repression and imposition of their own culture. After the Gezi uprising, the Başka Cinema commenced, which was established in November 2013 in order to go beyond the monopoly of the major distribution outlets and screen alternative films across Turkey. This connects to my discussion in the previous chapter, which concentrated around the reflective nostalgia culture⁴². The nostalgia for the lost theatres and movie theatres did not make this audience sit at home and idealise them but commenced their becoming active citizens, as they intended to claim the right to the city for their future.

In this section, I conceptualised Lefebvre's popular 'right to the city' theory within its larger and contemporary implications. It refers to a collective power over the process of urbanisation (Lefebvre, 1996; Harvey, 2008), which extends to all who seek inclusion, habitation, appropriation or participation (Coggin & Pieterse, 2012). Initial research on the issue has devoted 'the right to the city' to working classes (Lefebvre, 1996), but today other ethnically, religiously, or sexually marginalized groups are involved in the shaping of the urban future and decision making processes. The section conceptualizes the Emek movement, which sprang as a movement to claim right to the EMT in 2010. The movement reached its peak in 2013 in line with the commencement of the demolition and also the consolidation of other similar movements in Istanbul. My informants' nostalgic attachment to the EMT as a site of protest initiated their occupation of the movie theatre as well as the Yeşilçam Street, which hosts the EMT. The audiences intended to activate a 'dead street' associated with the past film industry, but the nostalgia for the past was not in the form of idealising the past industry or the republican values, but their intentions were evolving into a more cosmopolitan and less Islamist-neo-liberal future. In addition, the movement participants also had creative vision in them, like using other independent stores in the Cercle D'orient complex or showing films on the street. The practices of this community in the Emek movement is

⁴² For a detailed discussion of the concept of reflective and restorative nostalgias, see pages 162-163.

similar to those in the popular uprising, which started almost two months after the most crowded demonstration for the EMT.

7.3.Reclaiming the Right to the Gezi Park

During the summer of 2013, from the 31st of May onwards, smaller scale protests, like the Emek movement, turned into a massive wave of protests. The Gezi uprising has been vital in understanding the transformations in the urban structure of Istanbul and people's responses to them, as it turned into an Occupy movement, when the government decided to replace the biggest park in the centre of Beyoğlu, Istanbul (Gezi Park), with a shopping mall and a massive residential unit. The discontent stemmed mainly from the transformation of spaces in Istanbul but expanded and was directed to the overall authoritarian and Islamist neo-liberal features of the AKP government, which created a repressive culture for millions of people across Turkey. During the Gezi uprising, 'there were demonstrations in 80 out of 81 cities, with 3,611,208 people participating in 5,532 protests' (Gençoğlu Onbaşı, 2016: 273). 'Eight people died during the police attacks, and more than 8000 protestors were injured, some severely. Hundreds were taken into custody for "inciting riots" using social media' (Özkaynak, Aydın, Ertör-Akyazı & Ertör, 2015: 104).

The most important impact of the uprising was that it became the most wide-ranging and popular wave of protests across Turkey after the military intervention in 1980 and it mobilised a diversity of people from different gender, ethnic and religious backgrounds, which is not common at all in the history of Turkey. First, I want to illustrate the most crowded demonstration against state violence in Istanbul against the state's atrocities in the Kurdish region happened during the Gezi Park occupation, which was against the building of a military station in Lice. In the demonstrations, simultaneously in Beşiktaş and Kadıköy, Turks and Kurds chanted slogans like 'Everywhere is Taksim, everywhere is Lice', which intermingled the 'seemingly' irreconcilable 'spaces' and political struggles of Turks and Kurds. Furthermore, in Turkey the 'leftist' struggles have generally been 'secular', which implies that they were devoid of religious

symbols and practices. However, during the Gezi uprising, the anti-capitalist Muslims, along with other groups, performed Friday prayers in the park and the Taksim Square. During the uprising, they also organised 'Yeryüzü İftarları' (Earth Tables) on the İstiklal Street, while 'leftist' communities formed a corridor around them in order to protect them from the direct violence of the riot police. These instances show that the formerly irreconcilable communities cooperated during the uprising.

The existing literature on the Emek movement dealt with it as one of the small movements to launch the Gezi uprising (Köstepen, 2013; Yücel, 2015; Harmanşah, 2014: 130). Yücel (2015) describes the struggles to keep the EMT with reference to the Langlois Affair⁴³ in France in 1968. Although Yücel's articulation of the protests around the EMT represents a Eurocentric perspective in idealising the French protest in 1968, his framework of the Emek movement as a collective demand for a collective space in the hope of creating the future of the movie theatre on their own, draws attention to the 'right to the city' feature of both of the movements. Eder and Öz (2014) also articulate the EMT in the framework of the general commodification of Istanbul, especially Beyoğlu. They consider the case of the Emek as symbolic of the kind of transformation that the city of Istanbul has been going through since the 1990s in that a fake and glittery replica is preferred to a genuine historic theatre (Eder & Öz, 2014: 297). Other than these accounts, there is no research on the experiences of the participants/protestors within the Emek movement and its organic relationship to the Gezi uprising through the lens of first person experience.

⁴³ The Langlois Affair refers to the French state's removal of Henri Langlois from his position at the Cinematheque Française. In addition to Langlois, who was known as 'the patron' of New Wave Cinema, all staff sympathetic to Langlois were fired. Langlois and his supporters regarded the issue as a cultural coup by the state. Upon this event, street protests commenced on the 14th of February, 1968. The police inflicted violence over the protestors, including Godard and Truffaut. The violent confrontation with police is addressed to be a characteristic of the May 1968 protests in the same year (Myrent & Langlois, 1995).

This audience community was, in a way, ready for a much bigger wave of protests around April, 2013 and when I went back to Turkey in May, 2013, the protests in Istanbul were gaining much strength and were escalating. Similar to the Emek movement, the main aim of the Gezi protestors was to claim ownership of the commodified or to-be-commodified spaces and use them as centres of decision-making and democracy. One of my informants, Zuhal (a short films and documentary director, 31) said:

The Gezi protests was the offspring of the Emek protests, which started in 2010. We were exposed to state violence as much as this, for the first time during the Emek protests in April, 2013. I sheltered in a bakery to run away from the water canons and tear gas. This was the first time that I was exposed to direct state violence; it was horrid.

As I pointed out previously, increasing state violence during the course of the Emek movement prepared this community for a much bigger movement. Zuhal mentioned the opposition between the previous protests and the Emek protests in 2013. It was different not only because of the increasing violence, but also because of the perceived strength of opposition and the growing number of people attending. Sanem remarked on different segments of society who increasingly became part of social movements in 2013:

A certain segment of society, which were not quite on the streets before, were mobilised against the demolition of the movie theatre. It was both about urban culture and heritage and also about cinema. In addition to our small movement of the Emek, other ones on animal rights, the bans of abortion and Internet censorship paved the way to the Gezi uprising.

Sanem drew attention to the mobilisation of different communities who were not activists before, even when they might have been annoyed or worried about the course of things. This group consisted of people with more income and cultural capital, thus they belonged to an upper socioeconomic class. As the logic behind the Emek protests and the Gezi uprising was similar, even when the Emek protests might seem to originate (on the surface) as a movement only

against the demolition of this particular movie theatre, it was not that simple. The intentions to protect the movie theatre from demolition became a symbol for claiming the right and ownership of Istanbul, which has been radically regenerated. It also sprang from this community's insistence on benefiting from a variety of exhibition and distribution avenues.

Mehmet underlined the significance of the park culture that was created during the Gezi uprising, which challenged the increasing commodification of urban space in Istanbul:

The Gezi taught us to lay claim to our spaces, cities and neighbourhoods. We need to keep on having our participatory democracy through our meetings and forums in our neighbourhoods and parks. This way we can keep our spaces in the future because we can take direct action quickly.

The park culture brought with it a new understanding of activism, which relied on active participation in the decision-making through direct interaction with other activists and organising forums. Similar to the ways in which the Emek movement's main infrastructure rested on the claiming right to the movie theatre, which implied regaining subjectivity and agency, the park itself symbolised the centre of activism for the protesters in the summer of 2013. Karakayalı and Yaka (2014: 124) argue that

the primary infrastructure of the Gezi Uprising - the material setup that facilitated and enabled its constitutive modes of action and interaction - was the park itself. In contrast to Taksim Square, right next to the park, the space isn't suitable for marches and the choreography of unified masses. Rather, the fabric of the park facilitated a kind of federalist mode of assembly, enabling *encounters* between different sections, groups and identities who could thereby relate positively to each other, in the first step towards recomposition.

Listening to what other people had to say during the forums and transforming regular public spaces into self-reclaimed community spaces were the most important futures of the park culture in both the Gezi Park and in other parks. The park culture mainly consisted of neighbourhood assemblies and forum

arenas all around Turkey, which worked as an open-mic platform in order to bring people together, share their ideas and experiences and resolve problems in local neighbourhoods. All of these imply the increasing use of citizen rights and the desire to overcome the political crisis, to invoke Sofos (2014), by the power of the people rather than the power of the political leaders, states and/or military intervention. Mehmet's political action and insistence on the park forums also implied that the right to the city is not only about the present, but also aims for the future (Coggin & Pieterse, 2012). He perceived the use of forums in the parks in their potential to politicise people and create change for the future. In the aftermath of the Gezi uprising, activists continued using these parks as spaces of forums and art consumption, especially the Abbasağa and Yoğurtçu Parks. However, people's active use of these parks has slowly decreased in 2015 as violence was on the rise in Turkey.

The park culture replaced this community's everyday life habits as well as their cinema-going activities. As Janset remarked:

Coming to the parks where you can experience participative democracy, you can socialise with revolutionary people, you can swap clothes, you can freely sit and talk with people is more cinematic I think this is the real cinema. I think the Gezi uprising is going to change the film culture in Istanbul this way and I am sure this will create new directions in cinema in Turkey too.

In Janset's experience, the park culture represented an exchange culture that replaced consumer culture. It was an experience of solidarity and shared life as 'food was left for the protesters, which was then distributed by volunteers. Yoga classes were set up in the Gezi Park at noon every day. Bands played music, and kebab sellers sold their fodder in and around it. There was almost a carnival-like atmosphere, bringing people together rarely detected in Turkish society' (Yel & Nas, 2013). The carnivalesque culture during the Gezi brought different groups together and changed the understanding of demonstration and activism in addition to the ways people socialised. People started to sleep, wake up, eat meals, socialise and politicise there. The culture of sharing and

solidarity also informed the alternative circulation of tickets and films amongst my informants, during and other than the festival time. In addition to having access to films during festival time, they shared their hard drives as a way of coping with the availability of 'good films' on release. In that sense, the heavy urban regeneration programmes in Istanbul and the hegemony of certain distribution and exhibition outlets in Turkey not only changed their attendance of movie theatres and their feelings about film festival attendance, but it also transformed their every day practices of watching films and would potentially change the film culture in Turkey.

Görkem (30, an art director and project coordinator) who I had met at a shopping mall before, told me that his consumption habits had radically changed too. He said after the uprising:

Now my park culture has advanced, which makes me use the city more. We have protected the Gezi Park as a park and I believe we can do other things for the movie theatres in the future. In that period, all of my daily activities and practices have changed. I was not going to shopping malls that often, but I was still going to them. Now I will not shop from them. I started to go to independent movie theatres more often these days, at least once in every week.

One of the important developments, compared to my findings during the festival time in 2013 (although those times in April, 2013 were spent launching the uprising), was that my informants in Gezi Park or in other parks said that they were not going to use multiplexes anymore (as they still used these movie theatres one way or another before, when there was a 'need'). Informants such as Görkem referenced an opposition between their past use of the movie theatres after the uprising, which represented their overall consumption habits. This audience community was perturbed because shopping malls were radically replacing all other spaces in Istanbul and as individuals and communities with anti-neoliberal perspectives, they regarded these commercial strategies as a symbol of global capitalism. Also, the uprising made them use the city more, which implied that this community started to feel that they were the owners of not only movie theatres but also Istanbul as a city.

The Emek movement and then the Gezi uprising evoked broad-ranging discussions not only on what has changed with the uprising, but also on how to keep the struggles for the future; from the movie theatres to the films and from the trees to water. Cemal stressed the importance of enduring the boycotts and finding new ways of political involvement and creating awareness. He talked about the necessity of keeping the boycott of shopping malls, which started during the Gezi uprising. Cemal (who I shadowed during the uprising) discussed that it can only leave a longer-lasting cultural and economic impact if we can keep the boycott:

I hope we can maintain the boycott of shopping malls. People might not go there for 15-20 days during the uprising, which is good to remind powerholders of the power and will of people. However, we need to find creative solutions to turn it into an ongoing action. We need to think about the future of these spaces, how we are going to keep our independent spaces and boycott other commercial ones. We might, for instance, cooperate with some municipalities and/or civil societies in order to organise open-air screenings. The newly developed park culture in places like the Abbasağa Park during the uprising shows that people are open to these kinds of events, organisations and spaces.

The most important keywords from Cemal's quote here are 'the power of people' and the 'park culture'. Nearly all of my participants, including Cemal, stressed the importance of keeping the park culture. Cemal previously worked with municipal organisations so that he stressed the possibility of sustaining the movements and events through the support of different groups and institutions. To refer back to the counter-public sphere feature of film festivals and social movements, Cemal's suggestion denoted a collective and political process of learning and experiencing within alternative organisations such as the neighbourhood collectives, unions or the NGOs, which can enable different groups' participation in the public sphere. This also accounted for the crisis of legitimacy and loss of faith in the dominant public sphere in authoritarian and neo-liberal societies, which also throws light on the immediacy of claiming right to our own spaces. Cemal also drew attention to the 'practicality' of the current

social movements. Although boycotting certain symbols of global capitalism for a while is a very important achievement, new social movements need to address practical solutions on how to keep the struggles sustainable for the future.

Previous research on the Gezi uprising also described one of the most important features of it as a response to the mainstream media in Turkey. During the uprising, people marched to the headquarters of the mainstream media outlets (Tunç, 2015: 169). Akser and Hawks (2012) describe the post-2007 media environment in Turkey as a conservative, redistributive, panoptic and discriminatory media autocracy, which includes pressure on the Doğan Media Group, the YouTube and Twitter bans, the arrests of journalists and phone-tapping of political figures. The media became the main propaganda device for the AKP government and the existing alternative media outlets have been heavily pressured. In the course of the uprising, people realised that the mainstream media misrepresented the civil war and resistance in Kurdistan. As a response to the dysfunctional mainstream media, around the time of the uprising, people created their own media outlets such as Çapul TV in the Gezi Park or 'What is going on in Istanbul?' on social media.

As the 'right to the city' also involves the right to be heard, the right to publicity and communication, creating their own media content and using technology as a means were one of the most important features of the contemporary social movements such as the Arab Spring and the Occupy movements. Digital societies have changed the ways of publicity through extensive media involvement in an instant global coverage. This cosmopolitan urbanism, which is created through the alternative media outlets such as social media, attracts activists and collectivities because it offers visibility (Leontidou, 2010: 1191). The activists not only facilitated the Emek movement and uprising more easily through an effective use of social media, but they also used them in order to inform people of their social movements and create visibility for their efforts and movements.

The uprising therefore resulted in a more political and activist use of media as well as cinema. When the park was occupied, political documentaries,

which were related to urban regeneration and anti-capitalist or anti-authoritarian movements, were screened in the park. Later on, when the movement spread to other parks, I took part in a film workshop, where people talked mostly about documentaries and making documentaries. Along with some of my informants, I also attended a workshop on building your own media content in which people helped each other in the creation of news stories and in the distribution of them. DIY activity has long been identified with youth subcultures (McKay, 1998), but the political shifts following the 'Facebook and Twitter revolutions' that helped to end the rules of previous dictators in Tunisia and Egypt in 2011 constituted new modalities of political participation in which large numbers of activists, hackers, or artists repurpose corporately produced content or create novel properties of their own, often outside the standard systems of production and consumption (Ratto & Boler, 2014: 3). Ratto and Boler (2014) define this as 'DIY citizens', which means a self-creation that goes against the regulation of identity by an authoritarian government. The diverse and participatory features of citizenship extended the domain of the public sphere as well as the understanding of the right to the city.

Osman (29, a filmmaker and academic) drew attention to the use of technology for our purposes during the Gezi uprising, in addition to social media:

We need to utilise all channels of technology for our own purposes. Not only for cinema but also for our political movements, we need to use technology effectively.

This activist audience community was concerned with the utilisation of technology and media for their own purposes, which would challenge the ownership of media and technology by those who are in positions of power, such as states, governmental institutions, and military organisations. Hikmet, as a social media specialist for a well-known film magazine in Turkey, underlined how the festival community in question mobilised for the uprising:

All the people here, including the juries and everybody else, diverted their attention to activism. All the cultural events during the Gezi were at a standstill; none of them took place. For instance there was the Documentarist film festival during the Gezi's time span, it did not take place per se but moved to the parks. I could not post anything other than the Gezi on the social media accounts of our film magazine. I have been working for this magazine for a long time but I experienced the delay of the publication of an issue for the first time in our history during the Gezi uprising. When the magazine was out, which was mostly about the Gezi or the films on urban struggles, we put it on the Library of Gezi and I announced that. This was our only announcement in the magazine for a long time then. It was quite trivial to talk about cinema, when Gezi happened. The central groups, which organised the Emek and the Gezi movements were the same. The people who work for the creative sectors were quite at the centre of it. As an instance of this, the people who work for our magazine stopped what they did for the magazine and started a blog called 'What is happening in Istanbul?' and created its social media pages. The idea was to create news stories from the uprising, in order to inform people in Turkey and across the world.

The cinema-going activities of this audience community were politicised during the Emek movement but their practices were politicised even more and their activism became a lifestyle during the uprising. As it was in the case of Hikmet's magazine, my informants' activism resulted in the transformation of their jobs and everyday life practices. It was not only because this audience community participated in the uprising but the methods they used during the uprising, such as the occupation or the use and creation of their own media contents like 'What is happening in Istanbul?' which changed their engagement with media and their identities. For Castells (2012: 11), the autonomy of communication is the essence of social movements today, because it allows the movement to be formed and enables the movement to relate to society at large beyond the control of power holders. In order to form their social movement and communicate it to the society at large, this activist community created their own media contents, actively engaged with social media and boycotted the

dysfunctional mainstream media outlets, which manipulated all the news. Particularly during the Gezi uprising, the 'penguin media' in Turkey did not broadcast or publish any stories from the resistance for days, which also prevented the international public from hearing about it, except for via social media. The workers of this magazine did not prioritise publishing their film magazine and/or writing on films but embraced activist chores such as producing content about the uprising for their own DIY alternative/activist media platform, similar to many other activist groups. Furthermore, other events or activities were suspended, such as a documentary film festival, which used the spaces of the uprising rather than the allocated spaces for the festival. In this regard, occupying the park space with the projectors and films shows that film-going activities also became part of the 'right to the city' context.

Additionally, the activist cosmopolitan culture at the IIFF and the Gezi initiated more awareness of other inequalities and forms of repression in the history of Turkey. Especially within the context of the film festival and the Gezi uprising, film audiences were very much being exposed to news and films from alternative sources such as alternative media platforms, documentary initiatives etc. They were also exposed to other cultures, thus they became more aware of the existence of diasporic and other repressed communities in Turkey such as the Kurdish or the Armenian. 'The Gezi Park movement may well have spurred the realisation of a Turkish civil society that benefits from globalisation and localisation, which, in the long run, potentially suggests a more determined and democratic polity in Turkey' (Abbas & Yigit, 2015: 2). Although it is difficult to foresee the immediate results of the democratisation of Turkey through the uprising and other social movements, I was able to observe that in the course of the uprising, more people had an awareness of the taboo issues in the history of Turkey. Through their mutual urban struggle and their awareness of the media censorship and disinformation, some of my informants started to create an emotional bond between each other (as some of them already had awareness and/or were taking political action about the taboo issues). Eyerman (2005: 50) discusses that 'creating an emotional bond is part of what is meant by collective identity and the demonstration is one form to create the possibility for such bonding, which makes the boundaries between them and us visible

and real'. Not only demonstrations themselves but also occupying the demonstration spaces provided the chance for different actors to share the same space and become actors of political decisions. The process of using these counter-public spheres did not only rely on the engagement with rational decision-making but also emotional bonds between different actors, who previously had little or no contact.

One of my informants Olgun (22, a photography student) described his leap of consciousness and the transformation of his identity:

I have been boycotting shopping malls radically after the Gezi. I was also eating from take-away restaurants most of the time, such as kebab and food like that. My understanding of everything has changed now. For example I now try to cook. In addition, my opinion about the Kurds and the Kurdish language has changed, as well as on gay and queer people. This period has shown us that we can and should communicate. We started sharing food, cigarettes and toothpaste in Gezi Park.

My informants were critical about the power plants of capitalism such as shopping malls, banks etc, in addition to an increase in the awareness of injustices and inequalities over people with different gender, ethnicity and religion in Turkey. In addition to the protests' position against the neo-liberalisation of public spaces, its underlying purpose lies in the intention to regain subjectivity and agency which has been threatened not only by the AKP government's authoritarian/Islamist way of governing, but also by the previous Kemalist republican elites, which Turkified the multicultural (Sofos, 2014: 139-140). In this respect this audience community started to embrace an activist cosmopolitan perspective in addition to bearing anti-neoliberal and anti-Islamist standpoints. This community was also critical of the Turkey of the past, which relied on a nationalist ideology from its foundation onwards. Their perspective became more of an activist cosmopolitanist action during the uprising, as this community socialised and politicised with different groups, who came from quite a diversity of backgrounds and had different kinds of protest culture and agendas, such as the feminists, LGBTI communities, Kurds and/or the animal

rights activists. In this context, new allegiances were formed through direct contact that is otherwise undermined in an urban context.

Didar also regained her subjectivity without granting much importance to the 'success' of the movement, as the process was more important than the result. Didar said:

Our struggles might not succeed to keep the Emek as it is. However, with our struggle, we create awareness of the urban regeneration and of other issues that create repression, inequality, isolation, and discrimination. We went to Gezi Park in the hopes to prevent its transformation into a shopping mall and artillery barracks but then we succeeded. Who knows when and how our resistance will succeed. Besides, the process that transforms us is more important than the definite outcome we will achieve.

Through her politicisation, Didar attached importance to her transformation as an individual, which would also imply a transformation of the collective identity through direct political action. This community experienced that the democracy would not be 'given' to people but that it can only be taken via practicing democracy through their own assemblies. In this respect, my informants wanted to find more practical and immediate solutions for the violations of human rights and democracy by making use of public spaces and to keep their future struggles in the hope of claiming ownership of their own spaces.

Maintaining the park culture and the participatory democracy practiced in the parks would have prevented the interventions from above, which would also imply new dimensions for alternative screenings in Istanbul like Cemal's perspective on the open-air screenings. This is the way democracy can work in Turkey too, as the democratic rights of people were limited and their subjectivity and agency had been systematically undermined and frustrated through coup d'états and massacres etc. Similarly, Tuncay also talked about the extension of the culture created at the Gezi Park to other realms in life. He remarked that the forums in different parks were kind of a pilot process for our future struggles:

I watched *V For Vendetta* (James McTeigue, 2006) at the Gezi Park. It was a very amateur screen there and the sound was not the best. However, it was one of the best screenings in my life. It reminded me of the old open-air cinemas. There were screenings at the forums in different parks. These screenings show us other opportunities for exhibition. After the Gezi Park, if they attempt to demolish the Beyoğlu movie theatre or anything like that, it would be a lot more crowded than the protests for keeping the EMT.

This was a sentiment that was shared across many of my informants at the IIFF during and after the Gezi uprising. My informants were hopeful for the possibility of overcoming future oppressive changes implemented by the government and/or the state. Even if the new decisions, initiatives and events that would have come out of the struggles such as the amateur film screenings in the parks would not be 'perfect', it was metaphorically perfect for my informants, as these screenings represented the DIY efforts of their doers rather than companies', governments' or other institutions' interventions. The important achievement for them was that they claimed the right to the park and turned it into an open-air cinema, with their own decision.

The uprising also changed the centre of culture in Istanbul. Before the uprising, Beyoğlu was in a way a monolithic centre of Istanbul, even Turkey. Because the independent stores were replaced by shopping malls and global chain stores in Beyoğlu and there was increasing state violence in all neighbourhoods of Beyoğlu, people started to look out for alternative spaces or districts in Istanbul. The IIFF used one room in a big movie theatre in Kadıköy for more than ten years, but after the Gezi Park they started to use two rooms in this movie theatre. This was mainly because people started to move away from Beyoğlu, as it was shed with tear gas and police terror. After this, the Kadıköy district, which is a liberal district full of cafes, bars, students and independent shops, became more gentrified. The previous Beyoğlu audiences started to look for new centres and new spaces. Kadıköy was not only used by its own residents or the people from the surrounding districts anymore but audiences from other parts of Istanbul such as the audiences from the European side who

increasingly preferred Kadıköy and the REXX movie theatre. Janset and her friends started to use the REXX movie theatre more after the uprising:

I was not feeling the festival spirit in Kadıköy before but increasingly the festival community started to use Kadıköy more. I think people started to move this side of Istanbul after Gezi as the police were attacking even when they saw three people together. Last week after we watched a film at the REXX movie theatre, one of my friends took a photo of us (press members) and we sent it to Azize Tan on her own social media account, demanding more films and rooms in Kadıköy.

Janset and her friends effectively used social media in order to draw attention to the increasing demand of Kadıköy by the audiences. The participatory culture and people's intention to become involved in the making of decisions extended to the festival culture after the Gezi uprising. The people's political maps of Istanbul also changed, in addition to their commercial and leisure maps of Istanbul. They started to use Beyoğlu less, as it became more and more devoid of green areas and also became more expensive. The increasing presence of the police forces in the Taksim Square, especially after the uprising, was one of the reasons my informants did not intend to spend much time in Beyoğlu.

While my informants changed their neighborhoods, became part of civil societies and/or political parties after the uprising, they could not develop long-term achievements in their political mobilisation. The effective use of social media, the creation of their own media outlets, the formation of new avenues of political expression and the continuous use of the parks in the post-Gezi era did not help my informants achieve their ideals. Although the small urban social movements and the Gezi uprising represent important cases of non-violent civil resistances in Turkey, the fact that activists invested less thought and planning on what comes after the social movements might have led to their failure in protecting the EMT and overthrowing the government. Right after the uprising, some of my participants were also too invested in their individual trajectories rather than collective ones, for instance moving out of Taksim, which might have prevented their longitudinal achievements in their social movements.

7.4. Conclusion to the Chapter

The relationship of this audience with the IIFF has transformed because of the changing culture in Istanbul. The impetus of the Emek movement and the uprising was a reaction to make the places 'our home' as 'our home' meant for them a home for all of us, not for a privileged few. At first this audience community mobilised in order to claim ownership of the EMT and the Yeşilçam Street, which were also the defining spaces of the IIFF. As these spaces constituted the most important identity of the IIFF, the Emek movement also started and continued during the time period of the IIFF. In order to activate the Yeşilçam street and the EMT, they not only demonstrated with slogans and placards but also screened films on the street and occupied the closed down movie theatre before it was demolished. The intensity of the Emek movement increased in 2013 due to the commencing of the actual demolition. By 2016, there is now a new shopping mall instead of the Cercle D'orient complex, which hosted the EMT, the Inci Profiterole and the Rüya movie theatre. Before the demolition, this community also used other 'independent shops' in this complex in order to keep them active. Through their traditional protests like demonstrating and slogans as well as alternative protests that had creative vision in them such as screening films, this audience community claimed their right on the EMT and on Yeşilçam Street.

This audience community became part of the popular uprising in May, 2013, which was nearly two months after the last demonstration for the EMT. Smaller movements like the Emek movement resulted in a bigger uprising in 2013. They not only sought for their right to the movie theatre but also to the Gezi Park. In their protests, they used similar strategies in both of the social movements, such as occupation and creation of their own media contents like the blog of the Emek movement or the Çapul TV in the Gezi Park. They used these alternative media platforms in order to inform people about their events and protests. In this regard, the 'right to the city' expanded to media ownership in a bid to create awareness and participation, as well as going beyond the confines of 'the penguin media'. In the course of the uprising my informants started to have more awareness of the previous problems in Turkey, especially

related to the marginalised groups in Turkey. Due to the mainstream media's censorship of the uprising, this community had an awareness of the previously banned resistances, especially the Kurdish resistance.

Also, as the government uttered words like *çapulcu* or terrorists, this group started to have an understanding of other marginalised groups who were previously called 'terrorists'. In their claiming the right to the spaces of the festival and various other public spaces in Istanbul, this group increased their understanding of participation into citizenship, thus their agency increased. They openly expressed their views and became part of the decision-making processes in the parks and as a result of this, their park culture advanced. Furthermore, during the uprising, the tendency to dislike the addition of the Nişantaşı City's to the festival expanded to the boycott of the shopping malls, which signified one of the most evident anti-neoliberal audience behaviour during my fieldwork. The uprising changed their understanding of what to do for the future, how to keep movie theatres and how to extend the boycotts. As an example of this, some of my informants started to create their own media and some of them learnt how to create content in the workshops in the park forums. It also changed the centre of culture in Istanbul and Beyoğlu is no longer the perceived cultural centre for this community. In conclusion, this audience community's direct political activism during the film festival and the uprising changed the ways they used movie theatres, parks and the cultural centre of Istanbul. In this process, they became actively involved in the decision-making processes about these spaces although they could not have achieved long-term solutions with their social movements.

Chapter 8

Summary and Implications for Future Research

8.1.Key Findings

This research and subsequent dissertation set out to investigate audiences' social and political uses of film festivals, which can lead to the emergence of activist cosmopolitan identities and political action. By focusing on the practices of an audience community at the IIFF in the 2010s, this research aimed to show that in the increasingly authoritarian periods, film festivals can function as political spaces for their attendees. In the loss of faith in the traditional public spheres (e.g. the parliamentary system), this audience community took political action as part of the film festival in order to protect their past spaces (e.g. the EMT) and their film festival. While this audience community's political activism moved beyond the confines of the film festival, my methodology also changed. Rather than examining the impact of urban regeneration and the loss of the previous film industry on this audience community, I changed my focus to capture the audiences' relationship to the city, spaces and how their experience of the IIFF transformed according to the social movements around them. In the process of immersion, data collection and writing, I was a part of this audience community as both a member of audience and activist communities but the fact that I was able to write up my thesis in England helped me to alienate from the setting.

Providing links between cinema (films, film related events) and the sphere of politics (citizenship, democracy, protest), this thesis aimed to show that the citizen and consumer roles of audiences are not in tension but in harmony with each other. It confirms that the relationship between audiences and texts as well as their affinity with movie theatres and spaces are complex and fluid. In essence, this thesis was motivated by my concern about 'the troubling divisions' between film audiences and protestors and/or movie theatres and streets. Specifically, I was interested in how film festival audiences do not use film festivals solely as spaces for accessing rare or alternative festival films, but that they also use them as social and political spaces, which I examined through this particular audience's engagement with the public sphere of film festivals. This resulted from festivals' (not only film festivals but also other

arts festivals) decades-long relationship with wider sociological, political and economic issues.

This thesis shows the close affinity of film festival cultures to urban politics. It identified that from its early beginnings, film festivals have been in relation to the film traditions and cultures in their hosting countries (see chapter 4), but showed that they are also always tied to the urban culture of their hosting cities and the socio-political fabric of their time periods (see chapters 1, 5, 6 and 7). In this respect, as the social movements reached their peak in the global city of Istanbul in the early 2010s (see sections 3 and 4 in chapter 2 and chapter 7), the IIFF audiences also became part of these changes and in fact they created a shifting culture both at the festival and beyond (see chapters 5, 6 and 7). In order to examine the politicisation of a festival community at a specific time period during the Gezi uprising, this thesis concentrated on the film festival activities of an audience community, not only at the IIFF, but also in their year-round activities. Due to the fact that this particular audience community used the IIFF as a cultural counter-public sphere, this thesis revealed that their year-round activities were also in harmony with it; for instance they became a part of an uprising after the festival's time period and intended to claim their right to their spaces (see chapters 6 and 7).

In order to examine the transformation of a cinematic activity into a political and activist cinematic activity at a film festival, I employed an ethnographic research strategy, which was informed by audience as well as social movement research (see chapter 3). Since this is the first study that aimed to connect two different methodologies, namely audience and social movement research, it was necessary to develop new methodological and theoretical perspectives (see chapter 1 and sections 2 and 3 in chapter 3). I benefitted from a qualitative research method, more specifically ethnographic research method, in order to delve deeper into the narratives and activities of a film festival community (see section 2 in chapter 3). My focus here was not on the audience's reactions and engagements with the individual films, but their formation into a 'social group' in a certain spatial context of a festival (Smets, 2013) (see chapter 3 and section 2 in chapter 5). Employing an ethnographic method in audience research thus provided an opportunity to interrogate the

audience's shifting identities via their engagement with the festival and its spaces (see chapter 3). In addition to an ethnographic approach in audience research, I used an activist ethnographic perspective in order to examine their participation in social movements that revolved around claiming the right to spaces. By benefiting from a bottom-up activist ethnographic research strategy, which implied that I was also a participant of the festival and the protests, I was able to deeply examine how film festival audiences' belonging to the festival, understanding of their selves, community and solidarity transformed during a particular time period, which implied a radical change for Turkey.

The transnational activist space of film festivals, especially in global cities such as Istanbul, implied cultural counter-public spheres when there was a growing crisis in the bourgeois public spheres (see chapter 5). It was also related to the ongoing rights movement in Turkey and the Middle East hand in hand with the global increase in the intensity of social movements around the world, such as the Occupy movements and the upheavals constituting the Arab Spring (see chapters 2 and 7). Current social movements around the world mainly originated from the spaces that the individuals and communities inhabited and their rituals surrounding the spaces (see chapters 2 and 7), such as university occupations in Holland and Canada in 2015, park occupations during the Occupy movements, neighbourhood and/or regional defences of people in Baltimore and Rojava in 2014 and 2015. Claiming the right to the city creates possibilities about not only the present situation with regards to human rights, justice and solidarity, but also about the future.

This community's struggle in the Emek movement and the uprising stemmed from their intention to protect their spaces, which is the main source of the various global resistances and uprisings today, from Canada to Rojava (Leontidou, 2010; Harvey, 2015). The impetus of the Emek movement and the Gezi uprising was a reaction to make the places 'our home' as our home meant a home for all of us, not for a privileged few. This thesis shows that during the course of activism at a film festival and an uprising, a community's understanding of resistance, autonomy, use of spaces and citizenship also changed. This community started to organise forums, made stickers, created blogs, their own media contents and used occupation as a method in order to

claim right to their spaces and lives. Given the recent political news in Turkey, the importance of cultural spaces and events has increased even more. As the regime actively suppresses dissent, activists use culture and arts as avenues of political expression more widely, rather than going out on the streets or using the traditional public spheres.

This thesis also demonstrated that nostalgia is not a necessarily conservative concept. The anti-neoliberal and anti-capitalist dispositions of this audience community were hand in hand with their nostalgic feelings of the past. This did not prevent them from taking political action, as nostalgia can idealise the past but in the form of 'keeping the best parts of the past'. In this specific context, this audience community wanted to keep less-capitalist practices of their past engagement with cinema, urban politics and spaces (see chapter 6). They perceived their engagement with the coffers, the curtains as well as smells of the EMT in contradiction to their recent experience at the Nişantaşı City's movie theatre. While for the majority of this audience community, the Nişantaşı City's implied negative feelings as in feelings of being an automaton, other members of this community perceived it as the festival's opening up to new locales and people. The anti-neoliberal and anti-capitalist dispositions of this community, like their intention to boycott the shopping malls, were interwoven with their nostalgic feelings of the past form of the EMT and Beyoğlu, which was imagined as devoid of 'commercialisation' and 'market values' (see chapter 6).

Other than questioning the Western hegemony of the major axes of the film festival scenes and research (see section 4 in chapter 4), the politicisation and activism of the IIFF audience challenged the directly elitist connotations of festival attendance. This is not to say that, however, all of my informants eliminated their potentially elitist and even conservative underlying motivations, behaviours or dispositions. For instance, although it did not represent the majority of this community's viewpoints and ways of engagement with cinema, some of the members of this community had a negative view of commercial cinema and multiplexes and did not consider any transformative capacities of these media and platforms. Therefore, I was aware of the danger of the central concepts like cultural counter-public sphere, activist cosmopolitanism, reflective

nostalgia and 'right to the city' being reduced to idealist platitudes. Although this community used the festival as an activist space and a cultural counter-public sphere against the hegemony of authoritarian ideologies such as an Islamist neo-liberal one, neither the IIFF as an institution nor other festivals, are utopian or ideal spaces (see section 3 in chapter 4).

This thesis therefore shows that this audience community inverted the occupational aspect of neo-liberal and Islamist ideologies and used occupation for their own understanding of organisation and activism (see chapters 2 and 7). Against the occupation of Islamist neo-liberalism, this particular audience community occupied their own spaces in order to reclaim ownership of them and create an alternative lifestyle. The short-term occupation of the EMT and the long-term and wide-ranging occupation of the Gezi Park and other parks in Turkey were a response to the allegorical occupation of the Sunni-Islamic neo-liberalism in Turkey, with a nationalist face. This thesis therefore also accounts for an alternative understanding of globalisation, cosmopolitanism, modernity and neo-liberalism (see the introduction, chapters 2 and 5).

Park culture, in which participatory democracy was practiced during the uprising, became a vital part of this community's everyday resistance and lifestyle not only in 2013 and 2014, which were within the scope of my ethnography, but also in 2015. In 2015, the resistance of this audience community continued when the government wanted to ban the documentary on the guerrillas of the PKK (Kurdistan Worker's Party), called *Bakur* (Çayan Demirel & Ertuğrul Mavioğlu, 2015). 2015's festival was not part of my ethnography but my informants' resistance to prevent their film from being censored and intention to screen it showed the ongoing festival activism of this audience community. After the screening was cancelled due to the censorship of the documentary, this audience organised forums and protests in and outside of the Atlas movie theatre as well as the Abbasağa Park, which was an extension of the park culture and forums at the Gezi uprising as the Abbasağa became one of the most important parks that people organised forums during the uprising after the Gezi Park was occupied by the police forces. This incident in 2015 also shows the organic relationship of festival activism/the Emek movement with the Gezi uprising, as this audience community

used/reappropriated one of the central spaces of the uprising for their festival activism. Furthermore, it accounts for the activist cosmopolitan identities of this community, which was an inevitable part of their political action related to spaces in 2013 and 2014 (see chapters 5, 6 and 7).

8.2.The Originality of the Study

This dissertation furthers research into film festivals and social movements in four ways: methodologically, empirically, conceptually and theoretically. Methodologically, its unique combination of audience and social movements ethnography without reducing their particularity, creates new insights into qualitative methods in media studies. Empirically, the researcher's and respondents' use of the sites of cultural and creative industries merging with spaces of protests give new empirical evidences for the future of film festival research. Conceptually and theoretically, it introduces new perspectives to neo-liberalism, globalisation and cosmopolitanism as well as public sphere and nostalgia, which not only expand the boundaries of audience research and film festival studies, but also sociology and political science.

Therefore, in addition to contributing to audience and film festival research, this thesis contributes to the discussions on the future of democracy in a predominantly Muslim culture and in the Middle East, outcomes of which are not only vital for the Middle East but also for the globe. It also contributes to an alternative perspective on globalisation, which on the one hand implies the wider expansion of neo-liberalism and political Islam, and on the other hand it means diverse social movements against them. Despite the macro-analyses that disregard the ongoing struggles for democracy and human rights in the Middle East, this thesis intends to show that people stand up against the impact of political Islam, which often operates hand-in-hand with a Western-oriented ideology, neo-liberalism. The discussions on the politicisation of a particular film festival audience in Turkey in order to practice democracy and active citizenship

also throw light on the ongoing resistances across the world, even when repression and conservative ideologies are globally on the rise today.

8.3.Limitations of the Study and its Possible Future Developments

In this thesis, I examined the politicisation and activism of a film festival community within the context of a film festival and an uprising. The festival activism via the Emek movement, which began in 2010 and lasted until 2015, coexisted with other urban movements in the world starting from 2011, the Arab Spring and the Occupy movements. While I have written this thesis from late 2014 to 2016, in the aftermath of my fieldwork between 2013 and 2014, I now recognize the pessimism of the political moment in which we now live, and the way our recognition of this reality must impact the questions our field will address in the future. The impact and density of authoritarianism in Turkey grew in scope and density in 2015 and 2016, which shows that future research needs to address it for the audience communities and activists, as well as cultural and political spaces.

This thesis also opens up fresh methodologies to examine the ways people work in festivals, as the people's conditions within creative industries would reveal different aspects of neo-liberalism. Although previous research (Hesmondalgh and Baker, 2008; Loist; 2011) dealt with the precarious work in cultural industries, more empirical research needs to address the working conditions of different type of workers in different festivals around the globe, through extensive research methods. Future research can also benefit from addressing gender differences in the audience's attendance to film festivals and other cultural spaces. Although women participants in my ethnography were more active in their use of the film festivals as social and political spaces, further research needs to be conducted in order to examine this issue in more extensive ways.

This thesis opens up new agendas for future research into Middle Eastern festivals as well as cultural spaces and their different functions in the everyday lives of their attendees, especially in the face of growing authoritarianism. Although this thesis has provided some revealing insights into the relationship between cultural and political public spheres and the use of film festivals, it remains the task of future research to provide more nuanced concepts of the organisation of festivals during the rise of the neo-liberal period, which is hand in hand with the rise of political Islam.

There is also a need for more extensive comparative work on other Middle Eastern festivals as well as in other countries in different continents, in order to establish in what ways film festivals function as counter-public spheres for the film audiences and their spaces become protest spaces apart from being cinematic spaces. A comparative perspective of different festivals' use by the audiences would illuminate their different functions, which would include political functions but also other possible uses by their attendees. It is also vital to expand scope on investigation in regional festivals other than the festivals in 'global' cities or touristic sites, how their audiences experience the impact of global in their everyday engagement with the festivals, and how the audiences relate to the spaces of the film festivals.

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Appendix: Questions⁴⁴

- 1) When did your interest in the film festival start? How did you hear about it?
- 2) Where did you see the first films in the film festival?
- 3) Were the spaces of film exhibition important for you?
- 4) Were you with other people during the film festival? If so, who were they?
- 5) What kind of festival films were you watching then?
- 6) How were you choosing these films?
- 7) Do you follow the national selections or international selections in the film festival? Why or why not?
- 8) Which one of these do you think the film festival contributes to the most?
- 9) How do you choose your films now?
- 10) What kind of films do you watch in the film festival now?
- 11) Do you follow the media on these films? If so, what kind of media?
- 12) Do you watch their trailers?
- 13) Does advertising on films and the sponsorship affect your festival attendance?
- 14) Do you take a look at the booklet? Are the sections in the booklet important for your choices of the films and events?
- 15) How do you buy your tickets? Do you wait at the queue or use Biletix?
- 16) Do you have a Lale Card? What do you think about Lale Card?
- 17) Does attendance to the film festival change your everyday life? Is it a different from your everyday life practices?
- 18) Does the film festival change your understanding of other cultures? How?
- 19) Has your festival attendance to the film festival changed now? If so, in what ways?
- 20) Does your television viewing change your attendance to the film festival?
- 21) Have other avenues of distribution, such as DVDs, pirate copies or streaming changed your frequency of going to the festival?
- 22) Do you access the festival films other than during the festival time? How do you have access to them?
- 23) Does Baska Cinema affect your attendance to the film festival?
- 24) Does the film festival change your use of the city? How?
- 25) Does the film festival change your consumption habits? How?
- 26) Do you attend these films with other people now? Do you meet new people during the films?
- 27) Do you eat or drink during the films in the film festival? What do you think about other people's eating or drinking?
- 28) Do you make comments while watching the films? What do you think of other people's commentary?

⁴⁴ These were my questions for the general audience at the Istanbul Film Festival. For members of the non-hierarchical organisation, who participated in my research, I added a few more questions about the protests and how they organised them. For the two coordinators of the film festival, I asked additional questions about their institution, programming and working conditions of the film festival, as well as general questions relating to their own experience of the film festival as regular audience members.

- 29) Do you feel uncomfortable by other people's acts in the movie theatre? If so, what makes you feel that way?
- 30) Have you ever experienced any protests or a reaction from the audience during the films at the film festival?
- 31) Do you attend the festival's social events, such as master-classes, panels or parties?
- 32) Have the recent changes in the festival scene affected your festival attendance?
- 33) What do you think about the existing movie theatres that the film festival uses? Do they satisfy your needs?
- 34) Did you follow the protests against the demolition of Emek movie theatre?
- 35) Are you involved in these protests?
- 36) Do you have any reasons to attend/not to attend?
- 37) Do the recent changes in social fabric and political agenda in Turkey change your festival attendance? How?
- 38) Did you attend the Gezi Park uprising?
- 39) If so, do you think the Gezi Park uprising changes your festival-going practices and activities?